

# Using **volunteering** **infrastructure** to build **civil society**

Cees van den Bos





# **USING VOLUNTEERING INFRASTRUCTURE TO BUILD CIVIL SOCIETY**

De infrastructuur van vrijwilligerswerk  
benutten voor de opbouw van de civil society

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# 1 PREFACE: A PERSONAL JOURNEY

In 1972, the Dutch Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work (CRM)<sup>1</sup> launched an experiment with local volunteer centres in the cities of Tilburg and Arnhem, based on the following assumption: 'The community is not served only by provisions made by government; it is equally served by the self-activation of that specific community. The principle of civic involvement and self-activation includes ensuring that citizens have the opportunity to influence the development of society' (CRM, 1975b, 1). The Ministry of CRM considered volunteering as a means of contributing to civic involvement and self-activation. It aimed to promote volunteering by establishing volunteer centres. In 1977, the Ministry deemed the experiment with the two volunteer centres in Tilburg and Arnhem successful. For the quartermaster of the Arnhem volunteer centre, the end of the experimental period represented a convenient moment to search for a successor. In March 1977, unconscious of the fact that volunteering infrastructure would be a source of growing fascination in the years to come, I was appointed as his successor.

Between 1978 and 1985, the Ministry enacted a general measure that would provide every local government in the Netherlands that decided to establish a volunteer centre with half of the means necessary to establish it. Between 1977 and 1981, the number of volunteer centres expanded to 40, reaching a high of 150 around 1987. From the beginning of the experiment, the directors of the volunteer centres met regularly to exchange experiences and to develop policies and methods. The interest in these meetings increased so much that an agency was needed to organise and support them. In 1980, the National Conference of Local Volunteer Centres (*LOPV*),<sup>2</sup> which had been informal up to that point, was transformed into the formal National Association of Volunteer Centres (*LVV*)<sup>3</sup>, which received governmental support and resources for appointing staff. I became one of the members of the LVV board.

At the same time, volunteer centres were also being developed in England. On behalf of the LVV, I attended the national conference of the English National Association of Volunteer Bureaux (NAV B) in Northampton in 1986. This contact proved quite inspiring and useful. My counterparts and I discovered many similarities in goals, policies and activities, and we initiated collaboration. One of the outcomes of this collaboration was a three-day conference in St. Albans (UK) in 1989. This conference was organised by NAV B and LVV, and it was attended by the directors of 10 English, 10 Dutch and 10 American volunteer centres. The goal was to develop more in-depth knowledge about the promotion of local volunteering in these three countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministerie voor Cultuur, Recreatie en Maatschappelijk Werk

<sup>2</sup> Landelijk Overleg Plaatselijke Vrijwilligerscentrales

<sup>3</sup> Landelijke Vereniging van Vrijwilligerscentrales

In Germany, the establishment of volunteer centres<sup>4</sup> attained its full development about 1997. Inspired by the Dutch volunteer-centre model, the Germans paid frequent visits to their neighbouring colleagues in the Netherlands. The volunteer centre in Arnhem was a particularly frequent destination, due to its location along an international highway very close to the German border. In addition to many German volunteer-centre directors, the volunteer centre in Arnhem has also been visited by volunteer-centre directors from Denmark, Belgium, Romania and Latvia.

Looking back upon the more than 30 years that I have spent within the Dutch volunteering infrastructure, I conclude that the societal and – especially – the political importance of volunteering has been increased considerably during this period. In the Netherlands, the meaning of volunteering for public policies broadened from service delivery to encompass the social inclusion of people at risk, the involvement of citizens in political decisions, the performance of civil society and the strengthening of communities. The political support for volunteering also became broader during this period, extending from confessional to liberal and socialist parties. Which factors caused these changes? Was this interest simply a coincidence, or was it the result of deeper underlying causes?

The United Nations proclaimed 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers (IYV). The starting conference of IYV 2001 took place in Amsterdam. I was therefore able to attend this conference and meet representatives of volunteer-involving organisations and volunteer centres from all over the world. It was during this conference that I discovered that national, regional, and local volunteer centres were emerging in more countries than I had realised before.

In 2004, Professor Lucas Meijs of the Chair in Volunteering, Civil Society and Business at RSM Erasmus University Rotterdam, invited me to undertake doctoral research on volunteering infrastructure. To find a focus for this research, I began to reflect on my own practical experiences by describing the development of local volunteer centres in the Netherlands since 1970 (Bos, 2006). From 1980 until 2001, I participated as a board member representing the local volunteer centres in a series of organisations that formed the Dutch national volunteering infrastructure. This position provided me with considerable insight into organisational and public policies on volunteering in the Netherlands, as well as access to networks and resources that have been relevant for this research.

My reflection has been enriched through regular interaction with Dutch colleagues in the national, regional and local volunteering infrastructure. As a member of the board of the Cooperation,<sup>5</sup> a national cooperation of local volunteer centres, I have been involved in promoting the interests of local volunteer centres and in the programming of the national conferences since 2002. I have thus enjoyed a central position within which to share, discuss and sharpen my findings.

Parallel to my reflection process, I conducted a literature search on volunteering infrastructure (Bos, Brudney, Meijs and Ten Hoorn, 2005). This search didn't satisfy my curiosity for the development and functioning of the volunteering infrastructure in other countries. In 2006 and 2007, therefore, I explored the establishment, development and functioning of local volunteer centres in seven other countries, with the goal of identify-

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<sup>4</sup> Freiwilligenagenturen

<sup>5</sup> Coöperatie



ing similarities and differences, as well as investigating a definition of volunteering infrastructure. Due to the limitation of consulting only texts written in Dutch, English and German, I was able to locate resources concerning the development of local volunteer centres in eight countries: Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States of America. This list of eight countries is not exhaustive, and the countries were selected for convenience. They serve as cases for this research, simply due to the availability of the data needed to develop a general definition of volunteering infrastructure. Nevertheless, the involvement of all of these eight countries in the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project has enhanced this research with reliable and comparable scientific data on volunteering in these countries.

Supplementary to this written information, I have drawn upon the information and observations I have acquired through personal contacts with volunteer centre colleagues all over the world. During my doctoral research, these international contacts have offered me the opportunity to acquire information and to share, check and discuss my findings with a broad array of colleagues working within the volunteering infrastructure.

The establishment of a civil society and the development of volunteering in the formerly communist East Germany that began along with the reunification of Germany in 1989 added a special dimension to the contacts with my German colleagues. The development of volunteering and the related development of the volunteering infrastructure differ in 'the two Germanys'. This was an important reason that has led me to attend the annual national conferences of the German volunteer centres since 2005.

Reflecting on the descriptions of the development of volunteer centres in eight countries, I selected eleven points along which to compare these local volunteer centres. In the eight countries, I approached academic researchers specialised in the area of volunteering infrastructure. With the exception of Italy, researchers from all countries responded willingly to my invitation to provide feedback on my descriptions of the development of local infrastructure in their countries: Lars Skov Henriksen (Denmark), Steven Howlett (England), Peter Hilger (Finland), Gisela Jakob and Jan-Hendrik Kamlage (Germany), Lucas Meijs (Netherlands), Håkon Lorentzen and Line Dugstad (Norway) and Jeff Brudney (United States). I also asked them to write an article in reaction to the eleven points of similarity that I had established, and then to discuss these articles at what was, to the best of my knowledge, the first invitational conference on 'Volunteering Infrastructure & Civil Society' in Aalsmeer (Netherlands) in April 2008.

This conference offered the researchers an opportunity to compare and discuss the development of volunteering infrastructure in their respective different countries. The articles that they had written and their willingness to participate in the conference provided clear evidence that the researchers considered the development of volunteering infrastructure a relevant issue, in their own countries as well as internationally. The eleven points of similarity offered sufficient common ground so that the researchers could understand each other during this first meeting, and it facilitated the international comparison of volunteer centres. The researchers determined that volunteer centres are everywhere, agreed about six core functions that characterise local volunteering infrastructure and concluded that volunteer centres operate in countries with different institutional contexts.

I converted the knowledge that had been acquired thus far into an article entitled 'Using Volunteer Centres to Build Civil Society' (Bos and Meijs, 2008), which I presented at the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of ARNOVA<sup>6</sup> in Philadelphia in November 2008. I used this conference to discuss the way in which I have addressed my research topic, to discover gaps in my research and to locate important researchers or articles of which I was not yet aware. My fellow researchers reacted positively and with considerable interest, and they encouraged me to continue with my investigation of this topic. The nomination of our article for ARNOVA's Best Paper Award provided an additional impetus to do so.

In 2009, I was the keynote speaker for the General Assembly Conference of the European Volunteer Centre, which centred on the theme 'An enabling volunteering infrastructure in Europe: Situation –Trends - Outlook'. This offered me the opportunity to share and discuss my findings with representatives of organisations providing volunteering infrastructure in 27 European countries (CEV, 2009).

This dissertation recounts a personal journey through the international fields of volunteering infrastructure. Why should I tell this story? Why should anyone be interested in this story about my personal journey? What can you expect?

My journey into the realm of research began 2004, in order to satisfy my curiosity about the establishment of volunteering infrastructure in so many countries since the 1970s. Through travel and correspondence, I have encountered the same interests and forces in other countries that I have experienced during the more than 30 years that I have spent as the director of a local volunteer centre and as a board member for the Dutch national volunteer centre. My research endeavours have offered me the opportunity to analyse the circumstances that sparked the development of volunteering infrastructure. Observing these circumstances from several perspectives (academic, political, societal, practical) and at several geographic levels (local, regional, national, international), I discovered patterns that transcend the local and national level. In all of the countries I have studied, I have identified various parties, whose divergent interests in volunteering called for infrastructure that could serve to align them. On the other hand, I was surprised to discover that governments promote volunteering for any of four distinct motives. Countries appear to have specific preferences for one of these four motives, depending upon the prevailing nonprofit regime. These findings helped me to understand the field of forces in which the volunteering infrastructure operates and to explain the differences between the volunteering infrastructures existing in the countries I have studied. This knowledge has been of significant benefit to me, as well as to colleagues working within the volunteering infrastructure and policymakers who are involved with the issue of volunteering. These colleagues and policymakers encouraged me to perform this study and to share my knowledge with them.

How is my story constructed? Following the two introductory chapters, Chapter 3 provides an overview of volunteering for those unfamiliar with the concept of volunteering infrastructure. Because other authors have already provided extensive discussions of volunteering, this overview is concise and intended merely to outline the circumstances that led to the development of volunteering infrastructure. Chapter 4 is the most comprehensive and detailed. It provides insight into the phenomenon of volunteering infrastructure: its establishment, expectations of stakeholders, characteristic tasks and services, pros-

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<sup>6</sup> Association for Research on Nonprofits and Voluntary Action

pects and a template for a volunteering infrastructure. All of the data that I have found on volunteering infrastructure are documented for the first time in this chapter. This chapter will therefore strike a familiar chord with policymakers and practitioners in the field of volunteering infrastructure. In Chapter 5, I present my analyses of the research data on volunteering infrastructure. My analyses concern the extent to which providers of volunteering infrastructure in these eight countries actually conform to the template outlined in Chapter 4. I offer several explanations for the differences that identified through this comparison. These explanations are largely related to differences in the institutional settings of volunteering infrastructure in the respective cases.

In Chapter 6, I supplement the explanations for the identified differences between volunteering infrastructures (as described in Chapter 5) with insights of a different and more abstract character. These insights should be particularly interesting for policymakers. This chapter goes beyond the topic of volunteering infrastructure to address volunteering in general. I have discovered that scholars and policymakers tend to evaluate volunteering from four different perspectives: because of its contribution to welfare, economy, democracy and community. I relate this insight to Social Origin Theory (Salamon and Anheier, 1998), which distinguishes between four nonprofit regimes. I demonstrate that each nonprofit regime implies a preference for one of these four perspectives on volunteering. I subsequently indicate that a preference for each volunteering perspective implies different demands with regard to the six functions that are characteristic for the volunteering infrastructure. For example, liberal nonprofit regimes prefer the welfare perspective on volunteering, which places special demands on the *brokerage* and *marketing* functions of the volunteering infrastructure. In the same way, social-democratic nonprofit regimes prefer the community perspective, which places special demands on the functions *good practice development* and *developing opportunities*. The fact that the countries addressed in this research have different nonprofit regimes implies that the regimes in these countries place different demands on their volunteering infrastructures. This consequently implies that the volunteering infrastructures in these countries differ.

The specific demands that a preference for each perspective on volunteering places on the volunteering infrastructure are elaborated in Chapter 7. This information can be used as a manual for practitioners within the field of volunteering infrastructure and for policymakers whose task it is to equip their infrastructure properly for the support of the preferred perspective on volunteering. Summarising this research, Chapter 8 describes the main findings, identifies topics for discussion that the research has evoked, outlines the limitations of the study. In this chapter, I also formulate recommendations for policymakers and practitioners in the field of volunteering infrastructure and identify propositions for future research.

This research would not have been possible without the support of Lars Skov Henriksen, Department of Sociology, Social Work and Organization, Aalborg University, Denmark; Steven Howlett, Centre for the Study of Voluntary and Community Activity, Roehampton University, England; Peter Hilger, Department of Political Science, University of Helsinki, Finland; Gisela Jakob, Department of Social Pedagogy, Fachhochschule Darmstadt and Jan-Hendrik Kamlage, Bremen International School of Social Sciences, Germany; Ksenija Fonović, SPES Rome and Ettore Degli Esposti, Volunteer Service Centre Lombardia, Italy; Håkon Lorentzen and Line Dugstad, Institute for Social Research, Oslo, Norway; Jeff Brudney, Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University,

Cleveland, OH, United States of America. At different occasions, they provided me with the results of research on the development of volunteering infrastructure in their countries and (except for Gisela Jakob, Håkon Lorentzen, Ksenija Fonović and Ettore Degli Esposti) discussed these findings at the Invitational Conference on volunteering infrastructure, April 24-25, 2008 in Aalsmeer, the Netherlands. I am profoundly grateful to them.

Last but not least I thank Lucas Meijs for his inspiration and enthusiasm. During the journey I made over the past ten years, he was an eminent guide who has drawn my attention to unexpected views with regard to volunteering.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Volunteer centres are agencies established with the purpose of promoting, supporting and reevaluating volunteering in general. They operate at the national, regional and local level and together form an infrastructure for volunteering. The subject of this dissertation is the development of volunteering infrastructure since the 1970s. It addresses the reasons that volunteering infrastructure has been established simultaneously in many widely differing countries, identifies the functions that volunteering infrastructure provides in the various countries and discusses the possibility that volunteering infrastructure can be captured with a single, general definition.

To lay a foundation for understanding this development, Section 1 begins by presenting a definition of volunteering, followed by an outline of its social context (Section 1.2). Section 3 then focuses on the societal and political need to promote volunteering. Section 1.3 and the following sections of this chapter outline my research questions. Sections 1.4 and 1.5 describe the academic and societal need for this research. This chapter concludes in Section 1.6 with a description of how this dissertation is constructed.

## 1.1 Defining volunteering

Volunteering has developed gradually and naturally over the centuries, without any special public attention or mention of volunteering as such. In a study of civic traditions in Italy, Putnam (1993, 124) points out early signs of civic involvement and forms of volunteering. Putnam remarks on the relatively active role that Italian men had in determining decision-making and legislation from the twelfth to the sixteenth century. Putnam considers the emergence of this relatively horizontal, collaborative republican regime as a reaction to the violence and anarchy that persisted in the vertical hierarchies of medieval Europe. One result of these developments was the emergence of communes, which were rooted in voluntary associations of neighbours who pledged mutual assistance, common defence and economic cooperation to each other. As Putnam observes, these communes 'were not democratic in the modern sense, for only a minority of the population were full members' (124). They were nonetheless characterised by a remarkable level of participation in the affairs of government. Putnam traces the development of communal life, including the establishment of guilds by artisans and merchants as a source of mutual assistance, for social as well as occupational purposes. According to Putnam (1993, 125), all of these developments provide evidence that associative life was flourishing at that time. The forms of solidarity that emerged during this period were characterised by a tangible element of equality. Putnam uses the collective term 'civic community' to refer to the universe of neighbourhood associations, parish organisations, politico-religious parties, 'tower societies' and other groups that emerged during this period. Other literature that is relevant to Putnam's findings in the area of civic actions include Tocqueville's (2004 [1835], 643) elaboration on the principle of self-interest rightly understood and de

Swaan's (1988, 150) description of collective civic arrangements around 1850 (e.g. labour associations for mutual support in England, Prussia, America, the Netherlands and France).

The notion of volunteering emerged as a significant societal phenomenon beginning in the 1950s, first in North America and Europe, and later world-wide.[...] Former totalitarian countries welcomed volunteering as a symbol of regained freedom and a building block for civil society (Govaart, Daal, Münz and Keesom, 2001, 13).

In the 1970s, democratic national governments began to discover and recognise the values of volunteering, and to develop policies intended to promote volunteering. The initial definitions of volunteering are contained within these policy documents.

The phenomenon of volunteering apparently evades definition. In 1948, Beveridge defined volunteering as 'a private action for a public purpose'. More recently, Gaskin and Davis Smith (1995, 118) define volunteering as 'time given freely and without pay to any organisation which has the aim of benefiting people or a particular cause'. Many other definitions describe the interfaces of volunteering with other societal domains (e.g. government, market and private life), which are not strictly part of the voluntary sector. Govaart and colleagues (2001, 16) distinguish volunteering from paid work, obliged activities and help in the private sphere. In studies by Cnaan, Handy and Wadsworth (1996) and by Handy, Cnaan, Brudney, Ascoli, Meijs and Ranade (2000), an instrument is elaborated for determining who is considered a volunteer, based on an estimation of the net costs of volunteering. Despite wide variations, most definitions of volunteering contain four elements: 1) the absence of compensation, 2) the absence of obligation, 3) an organisational context and 4) an orientation towards the interests of others, a specific organisation or society as a whole. The *State of the World's Volunteerism Report* (UNV, 2011a, xx) emphasises "how volunteerism is a means by which people can take control of their lives and make a difference to themselves and to those around them".

In this study, the focus is on volunteering within organisations. Most volunteering takes place within voluntary organisations, which are defined according to five key criteria (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 2):

- Some kind of formal structure;
- Self-governance;
- No distribution of profits (any surplus generated must be used to benefit the organisation);
- Private (not a part of an agency of the government);
- Voluntary (membership is not coerced or mandated by law).

Because the criteria 'nonprofit' (3) and 'non-governmental' (4) are very distinctive in this definition, the terms nonprofit organisation (NPO) and non-governmental organisation (NGO) are commonly used as synonyms for voluntary organisation. According to the division of the voluntary sector's functions into service and expressive functions (Salamon, Sokolowski and List, 2003, 22; Textbox 1), it would make sense to reserve the term NPO for voluntary organisations with a service function and the term NGO for voluntary organisations with an expressive function. The situation in practice is different. For example, Salamon and colleagues (2003, 22) present service and expressive functions as features of NPOs, as shown in Textbox 1. The term NGO is not used consistently for all vol-

untary organisations with expressive functions, although it is largely confined to organisations within the field of human rights, environmental or development work.

This study will follow the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project in using term NPO in a general sense to refer for most voluntary organisations. The term NGO will be restricted just for organisations involved with human rights, environmental and development work. When referencing other works, however, the preference of the cited author will be used. Handy (1988) distinguishes between three goals that volunteer activities can have. Each of these goals attributes a specific character to volunteering (Dekker, 2005, 3; Table 1). I elaborate on this distinction in Chapter 4.

Table 1: Goals and character of volunteer activities

Goal	Character
Service delivery	Unpaid work
Campaigning	Active citizenship
Mutual support	Active membership

### **1.1.1 International differences: naming and participation**

*Naming:* Different cultures have different words for the concept of volunteering, and the exact meanings of these words can vary considerably. According to Musick and Wilson (2008, 11), 'Although the term "volunteer" is a familiar part of everyday language in Western cultures, we cannot be sure it indicates a distinct sphere of social practice in a way that is useful for scientific purposes'. For example, the German terms *Ehrenamt* (honorary office) and *ehrenamtliche Tätigkeit* (honorary office activity) emphasise the honorary component, official status and public legitimacy of particular functions or activities rather than any voluntary character that they may have. The contemporary notion of honorary office has been largely divorced from its origins, and its meaning has moved closer to the concept of voluntarism (Anheier and Seibel, 1993). A number of terms that have been introduced more recently express the concept of volunteering more accurately, including *bürgerschaftliches Engagement* (civic engagement) and *freiwillige Arbeit* (volunteer work). In the Netherlands, the new term 'voluntary involvement' (in Dutch: *vrijwillige inzet*) and the old term 'volunteer work' are used side by side (Huisman, Meijs, Roza, van Baren, 2011) The sections that follow provide explanations for international differences in the meaning of volunteering. In the interest of providing a clearer understanding of the phenomenon of volunteering, the discussion in this chapter is restricted to global characteristics.

The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (e.g. Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001) provides evidence on volunteering in 24 countries, including six of the eight countries examined in this study.<sup>7</sup> Salamon and Sokolowski divide these nonprofit organisations into 12 categories, according to their principal activities (Table 2). Although they do not claim to be exhaustive, these categories do provide an impression of the breadth and diversity of the field of volunteering. The category 'Culture and recreation' also includes the field of sports, which involves many volunteers. In Table 2, the distribution of volun-

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<sup>7</sup> Started in 1989, the Johns Hopkins Project continues to expand, and it currently provides information about the nonprofit sectors of 46 countries. For additional information, (Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (2010).

teering across 10 fields (religions congregations excluded) is indicated in parentheses, based on a 1995 inquiry (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 7). Nearly 60% of all volunteer activity in the countries investigated took place in the sectors 'Social services' and 'Culture and recreation', although these two categories also show the largest standard deviations. This indicates the presence of significant variation in the amount of volunteer activity in these categories across countries. I elaborate on these variations in Chapter 6.

Table 2: Sectors and distribution of volunteering (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 3 and 7)

1. Culture and recreation (26.7%)	7. Civic and advocacy (5.3%)
2. Education and research (6.8%)	8. Philanthropy (1.6%)
3. Health (7.8%)	9. International (1.6%)
4. Social services (31.1%)	10. Religions congregations
5. Environment (3.6%)	11. Business & professional, unions (5.7%)
6. Community & economic development (7.2%)	12. Other

Salamon and colleagues (2003, 22) divide the 12 sectors listed in Table 2 into two broad categories: service and expressive functions (Textbox 1). This distinction helps to clarify the various roles that nonprofit organisations play.

Textbox 1: Functions of nonprofit organisations (Salamon and colleagues, 2003, 22)

\* **Service functions** involve the delivery of direct services such as education, health, housing, economic development, promotion, and the like.  
 \* **Expressive functions** involve activities that provide avenues for the expression of cultural, religious, professional, or policy values, interests, and beliefs. Included here are cultural institutions, recreation groups, religious worship organisations, professional associations, advocacy groups, community organisations and the like.

Data from 32 countries show that service functions are dominant in terms of scale: over 60% of the total paid and volunteer workforce in the civil-society sector (as measured in full-time equivalents) is engaged primarily in service functions. Education and social services are the dominant areas in which these functions take place: over 40% of the non-profit workforce (paid and volunteer) is engaged in these areas. Culture and recreation (19%) and occupational representation (7%) are the most prominent sectors in the field of expressive functions (Salamon and colleagues 2003, 22).

The relationship between service and expressive functions varies by country. For example, 35% of the civil-society workforce in Norway is engaged in service functions, and 61% is involved in expressive functions. In the Netherlands, 75% of the civil society workforce is engaged in service functions, with 24% engaged in expressive functions<sup>8</sup> (Salamon and colleagues, 2003, 26).

*Participation in volunteering:* Differences in the definition of volunteering (see above) make it difficult to compare volunteer participation across the eight cases addressed in this study. The international research of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project is an important resource for this type of data. For example, data on the extent of volunteering in 24 countries are included in a study by Salamon and Anheier (2001, 5). Table 3 presents the extent of volunteering as a percentage of non-agricultural employ-

<sup>8</sup> Govaart and colleagues (2001) provide general information on volunteering in 21 countries worldwide. For general information on volunteering in European countries, see Hall, Meijs and Steenbergen (2004), Spes (2006, 2009a, 2009b) and the website of the European Volunteer Centre (CEV, 2009).



ment (expressed as FTEs) in six of the eight cases addressed in this research (Denmark and Norway excluded).

Table 3: Volunteering as a percent of non-agricultural employment (expressed in FTEs); Source: Salamon and Anheier (2001)

England	4.9%	Finland	3.5%
Germany	3.3%	Italy	1.3%
Netherlands	7.5%	United States	4.6%

The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (2004) also offers a summary of the percentage of the adult population participating in volunteering, including data for seven of the eight cases addressed in this study (Denmark excluded; Table 4).

Table 4: Percentage of adult population volunteering (Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (2004)

England	30%	Finland	8%
Germany	10%	Italy	4%
Netherlands	16%	Norway	52%
United States	22%		

As shown in Table 5, data from the European and World Values Surveys (Dekker and Broek, 2005, 51) concerning the percentage of the entire population actively involved in volunteering in 2000 show quite different figures for five of the eight cases included in this study (Finland, England and Norway excluded).

Table 5: Percentage of the entire population volunteering (Dekker and Broek, 2005, 51)

Denmark	20%	Germany (West)	8%
Italy	16%	Netherlands	31%
United States	46%		

With regard to the various percentages mentioned in Tables 3, 4 and 5, it is important to note that volunteering is not measured consistently across countries.

**1.2 The societal context of volunteering**

This section provides a discussion of academic views and public policies regarding the social context of volunteering. There is much to say with regard to this topic, and many scientific studies have been published. This section, however, is confined to the presentation of a few leading academic studies and policy documents that can enhance the understanding of this dissertation. A more extensive and exhaustive treatment of this topic is provided later in this work. The focus of this study is on the different meanings that scholars and governments assign to volunteering. In essence, it concerns the division of responsibilities between government and citizens; it is about volunteering as an expression of civic involvement or active citizenship, about volunteering as a vital resource for democracy and about the construction of a civil society.

### **1.2.1 Academic views**

The societal context of volunteering is particularly evident in democratic societies (e.g. Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States), where the concept of an active or civil society is a common topic of discussion. The sharing of responsibilities between government and citizens, the participation of citizens in society and their contributions to society (Zimmeck, 2010, 90) form an important topic in the context of civil society. In this context, volunteering is considered as both a means of delivering services and a way of expressing active citizenship.

A number of scholars who have investigated the way in which democracy works have developed insights (direct or indirect) into the political meaning of NPOs or volunteering. This section reviews several leading authors on this topic. A more extensive elaboration follows in Chapter 6.

For example Alexis de Tocqueville, a French aristocrat, was very interested in democratic government. For this reason, he visited the United States between 1831 and 1832. Among many observations, Tocqueville notes:

As soon as a man begins to treat of public affairs in public, he begins to perceive that he is not so independent of his fellow-men as he had at first imagined, and that, in order to maintain their support, he must often lend them his co-operation (Tocqueville, 2004 [1835], 623).

According to Tocqueville, citizens who assume responsibility for small public affairs in their local communities are more likely to show concern for the common good. They realise that they must rely on and invest in their fellow citizens. Tocqueville summarises this understanding in the principle of 'interest rightly understood' (Tocqueville, 2004 [1835], 643) or 'enlightened self-interest'. Tocqueville further emphasises the importance of public and political associations to democracy:

I met several kinds of associations in America, of which I confess I had no previous notion; and I have often admired the extreme skill with which the inhabitants of the United States succeed in proposing a common object to the exertions of a great many men, and in getting them voluntary to pursue it (Tocqueville, 2004, [1835], 629).

Osborne and Gaebler (1992) observe a revolutionary restructuring of the public sector. In their book *Reinventing Government*, they develop a new concept of how governments should function, expressed in ten operating principles (Textbox 2). Several of these principles (1, 2, 4, 8, and 9) can be seen as an acknowledgement of the societal importance of NPOs and volunteering.

Textbox 2: Ten Driving Forces of Change in the Public Sector (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992)

- *Steer, rather than row*
- *Empower communities to solve their own problems, rather than merely deliver services*
- *Promote and encourage competition, rather than monopolies*
- *Be driven by mission rather than rules*
- *Be result-oriented by funding outcomes rather than inputs*
- *Meet the needs of the customer rather than the bureaucracy*
- *Concentrate on earning money rather than just spending it*
- *Invest in preventing problems rather than in curing crises*
- *Decentralise authority rather than build hierarchies*
- *Solve problems by influencing market forces rather than creating public programs*

In *Making Democracy Work*, Putnam (1993) stresses the meaning of voluntary associations, volunteering and civic involvement for the democratic and economic function of Italian regions (Textbox 3). Putnam considers volunteering and associations important elements of civil society.

Textbox 3: The meaning of voluntary organisations for democracy and the economy

*Despite the whirl of change, however, the regions characterized by civic involvement in the late twentieth century are almost precisely the same regions where cooperatives and cultural associations and mutual aid societies were most abundant in the nineteenth century, and where neighbourhood associations and religious confraternities and guilds had contributed to the flourishing communal republics of the twelfth century. And although those civic regions were not especially advanced economically a century ago, they have steadily outpaced the less civic regions, both in economic performance and (at least since the advent of regional government) in quality of government (Putnam, 1993, 162).*

In a plea for the renewal of social democracy through a transition from welfare to activation, Giddens (1998) opens a 'third way' between neo-liberalism and the traditional Keynesian welfare state (Textbox 4). The activating state is an augmentation of the active state: in addition to moving, the state makes others move and reinstates reciprocity. Activating is appropriate to both old and new social movements and it corresponds to both conservatives and liberals (Hilger, 2005a, 3).

Textbox 4: The 'Third Way'

*The welfare State has played its part: set up under the aegis of collectivism, welfare state institutions have helped liberate individuals from some of the fixities of the past. Rather than seeing ours as an age of moral decay, then, it makes sense to see it as an age of moral transition. If institutional individualism is not the same as egoism, it poses less of a threat to social solidarity but it does imply that we have to look for means of producing solidarity. Social cohesion can't be guaranteed by the top-down action of the state or by appeal to tradition. We have to make our lives in a more active way than was true of previous generations, and we need more actively to accept responsibilities for the consequences of what we do and the life style habits we adopt. The theme of responsibility, or mutual obligation, was there in old-style social democracy, but was largely dormant, since it was submerged within the concept of collective provision. We have to find a new balance between individual and collective responsibilities today (Giddens, 1998, 36).*

According to Giddens, the state should begin by attempting to mobilise other actors to perform tasks. When there is no market solution in sight, or when it is necessary for societal actors to avoid biasing the provision of services, the state should take responsibility for financing a service. Ewijk (2006) uses the term 'deterioration strategy'<sup>9</sup> to refer to the belief that citizens will act in the absence of the state. Citizens are no longer regarded as passive recipients of benefits (Evers, 2000). Co-production between citizens and state

<sup>9</sup> *Verelendungsstrategie*

has become the motto in Europe. Government stimulates, facilitates and regulates the civil society, which addresses social issues and questions related care (Ewijk, 2006).

Lorentzen and Dugstad (2008, 9) compare the benefits attributed to voluntary or civic activities in the academic literature to those of the state, the market and kin systems/family. They conclude that civil society is able to:

- Mobilise unpaid labour;
- Produce services people can trust;
- Engage neighbours in community welfare activities;
- Raise empathy and moral engagement for the less fortunate;
- Include marginal and vulnerable groups in collectives.

### **1.2.2 Public policies**

The section below presents these policies for the cases that are addressed in this study. In 1972, the Dutch government initiated a number of experiments to promote volunteering. The accompanying policy document refers to the United Nations Declaration on Social Development (March 1, 1968):

People have the duty to participate substantially in the social and economic development. The more everybody contributes his best capacities to the community he belongs, the more everybody will feel at home. The principle of social participation and self-activation means that citizens self must have the opportunity to indicate the direction of the desired development of society. Here volunteering is valued as a way of participation and self-activation (CRM, 1975b, 1).

Between 1994 and 2009, the Dutch government commissioned the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP)<sup>10</sup> to publish five studies on the meaning of volunteering for civil society (Deth and Leijenaar, 1994; Dekker, 1994, 1999; Hart, 2005; Dekker and Hart, 2009). These studies place volunteering in a perspective that goes beyond service delivery or a temporary substitution for paid work. They focus on the societal and political consequences of the volunteer involvement of citizens as participants in public debate and in the governance of organisations.

A new interest in civil society coincides with the collapse of the former Eastern Bloc, an event that undermined the trust in the state as the centre of society. Economic crisis and unemployment diminished enthusiasm for the free market. Advancing individualism weakened interest in the family, neighbourhood, church and other traditional social connections. For this reason, studies began to focus on a number of issues in addition to volunteering, including the gap between citizens and government, citizenship, calculating citizenship, the core business of government and the responsible society.

During his term as Governor of Arkansas and during his campaign for the Presidency of the United States, Bill Clinton endorsed the ideas advanced by Osborne and Gaebler (1992) in *Reinventing Government*. Once elected, Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore in initiated the National Partnership for Reinventing Government in 1993 (with Osborne

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<sup>10</sup> Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau

serving as key advisor), to reform the operations of the federal government. The mission of the partnership was to create a government that 'works better, costs less, and gets results Americans care about' (Kamensky, 1999).

In England, governments of all political tendencies (e.g. left-wing, right-wing) have demonstrated interest in promoting volunteering since the 1970s. The campaigns and programmes that have been established by successive governments are more an expression of the broader issue of relationships between the individual and the state than of any interest in volunteering for its own sake (Davis Smith, 1998a). The Wolfenden Report on the Future of Voluntary Organisations (Wolfenden, 1978; Zimmeck, 2010) plays a key part in the history of the UK Voluntary sector, with its valuation of voluntary organisations as a way of breaking state monopolies in the area of service provision (Howlett, 2008, 4).

Rather than playing a fundamental role, the presence (or absence) of volunteers tended to be of incidental importance in this and later political views regarding the role of voluntary organisations. Howlett (2008) cites earlier research to show that, although successive governments apparently had no coherent vision on volunteering, three elements of such a vision could be identified in the statements that the respective ministers made about volunteering (Howlett, 2008, 4):

- As a less expensive alternative to state welfare provision;
- As a means of restricting state welfare provision to a safety-net function (to fill the void in areas not covered by volunteers);
- As a means of 'defending individualism against monolithic state provision'.

In 1988, the Speaker of the House of Commons, Bernard Weatherill, established the Commission on Citizenship (which published its report in 1990) in order to consider how to 'encourage, develop and recognise Active Citizenship within a wide range of groups in the community, both local and national, including school students, adults, those in full employment, as well as volunteers'.

In the late 1990s, the renewal of social democracy in England gave rise to the concept of the Third Way (Textbox 4) between neo-liberalism and the traditional Keynesian welfare state (Giddens, 2000). In his keynote speech at the annual conference of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO, January 21, 1999), Prime Minister Tony Blair emphasised the development of civil society, which implies a central role for voluntary action and volunteering (Howlett and Locke, 1999; Rochester, Ellis and Howlett, 2010, 2).

In addition to Blair, the notion of the Third Way influenced the meanings of voluntary organisations and volunteering in the interpretations of a number of other governmental leaders, including Clinton in United States, Kok in the Netherlands, Jospin in France, Prodi in Italy and Schröder in Germany (Giddens, 1998, 154; Howlett and Locke, 1999).

Germany was facing enormous challenges in the 1990s, due to national debts, reunification and the need to fulfil the criteria of the Maastricht Treaty. National, federal and local governments were seeking ways to preserve citizen loyalty despite decreasing state performance. The Third Way offered a solution (Schröder-Blair Paper, 1999). In short, citizens gained freedom, autonomy and policies aimed at support and activation in exchange for decreased permanence and security in welfare services and support (Kamlage, 2008,

21). With the idea of a limited, activating state, the concept of a civil society composed of active and self-reliant citizens became increasingly important. The 2001 International Year of Volunteers sparked a discourse on civil involvement within the German *Bundestag*. Civil involvement was considered an 'inextricable condition for social cohesion', and the discussion led to the establishment of the Study Commission on the Future of Civic Activities<sup>11</sup> (Enquete-Kommission, 2002, 5).

In Italy, the crisis of the welfare state in the mid-1970s brought growth and success to the nonprofit sector. The state's inability to provide answers to the emerging social problems created an opportunity for voluntary organisations to collaborate with public services or, in some cases, to provide a substitute for them (Barbetta, 1993, 6).

In the Scandinavian cases (i.e. Norway, Denmark and Finland), the transformation from welfare state to welfare society created a need to reevaluate the service-delivery function of volunteering. In these cases, however, this reevaluation was much less extensive than it was in the other cases addressed in this study. Lundström and Svedberg (2003, 218) demonstrate that the Scandinavian form of welfare state (i.e. the relationship of this type of state to its voluntary sector) did not decrease the sector's role in society. Instead, the type of state affected the sector's composition and organisation in ways that differed from those observed in other types of welfare regimes. The democratic dimension of volunteering is particularly prominent in Scandinavian cases, and this creates opportunities for citizen participation in decision-making, along with social groups that have platforms upon which citizens can express their views and defend their interests. This dimension was the government's response to women's movement and other grassroots initiatives, which were demanding that individuals gain influence over their own lives and living conditions.

### 1.3 Societal and political need to promote volunteering

Since the 1970s, initiatives have emerged in various countries to promote and support volunteering in general. It is striking that governments and voluntary organisations are joining in a common effort to invest in measures designed to initiate and support volunteer involvement. Until then, volunteer involvement had largely been the exclusive domain of voluntary organisations, each of which had its own traditions, measures and channels for recruiting volunteers. In the 1970s, when volunteering ceased to be self-evident and traditional patterns of volunteering began to change, voluntary organisations were confronted with a decline in the availability of volunteers, which they could not stop on their own. To combat this decline, they began investing in collective measures to recruit volunteers by establishing national, regional and local volunteer centres, which together formed an infrastructure for volunteering (Bos, 2008a).

In the eight countries serving as case in this study, about 2000 local volunteer centres are operating (Table 6).

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<sup>11</sup> *Enquete-Kommission 'Zukunft des Bürgerschaftliches Engagements'*

Table 6: Year of establishment and actual number of volunteer centres in eight cases

Country	First VC	Number of volunteer centres
America	1919	365 (05/2006)
Denmark	1992	50 (11/2011)
England	1964	324 (04/2008)
Finland	1993	37 (03/2006)
Germany	1980	322 (02/2009)
Italy	1991	78/415 (2011) <sup>12</sup>
Netherlands	1972	224 (12/2012)
Norway	1991	350 (12/2012)

Information obtained from international conferences (e.g. the General Assembly Conference of the European Volunteer Centre, 14-16 October 2009 in Malmö and the last German National Volunteer Centre Conference, 28-30 October 2009 in Halle an der Saale) shows that local volunteer centres also are active in other countries, including Portugal, Romania, Belgium, Luxemburg, Swiss, Luxembourg, Croatia, Poland, Austria and Korea. For example, Korea (2009) has 248 local volunteer centres. This information confirms my observation that volunteer centres constitute a considerable international phenomenon, and that they are occurring in numbers that deserve academic attention.

As shown in Section 1.2, governments appear to have good reasons for supporting (and, in some cases, even starting) such initiatives. Around the 1970s, welfare states began to discover their limits and acknowledge the potential influence of NPOs with regard to public policy (Najam, 2000, 376). Volunteer involvement is an essential feature of NPOs. The contributions that volunteers make to welfare provisions reduce the cost of providing these services publicly (Zimmeck, 2010). In addition, the above-mentioned changes in patterns of volunteering have become particularly visible in modern societies that support civil society. In the concept of civil society, volunteer effort is considered an essential feature in the delivery of services by NPOs. It has also acquired a political dimension: volunteering as an expression of civic engagement and 'a vehicle for participating in and contributing to society' (Zimmeck, 2010, 90).

At this point, I will state the questions underlying this research (marked with bullet points).

- *Why has volunteering infrastructure been established simultaneously in many countries?*
- *Which functions does the volunteering infrastructure provide in various countries?*
- *How is volunteering infrastructure defined?*

It is not my intention to elaborate on the effectiveness of activities and instruments that volunteer centres use in order to perform their core functions.

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<sup>12</sup> Italy has 65 provincial, 9 regional and 4 interprovincial or sub-provincial back offices, with 415 local front offices (Interview with Ettore Degli Esposti, Regional VC Lombardia, Milano, January 5, 2010; Fonovic and Iacobucci, 2011).

## 1.4 Academic relevance

In 2001, nearly 130 countries took part in the International Year of Volunteers (IYV), proclaimed by the United Nations. More than 500 committees from all around the world planned and coordinated a host of activities and events at the national, regional and local levels. The starting conference of IYV 2001 in Amsterdam was attended amongst others by representatives of national, regional and local volunteer centres from all over the world. For example, they were being established in South Korea, Russia, the Czech Republic, France and Canada (Govaart and colleagues, 2001; Hal and colleagues, 2004). Many of these volunteer centres joined the *International Association of Volunteer Effort* (IAVE), a network with the goal of promoting, supporting and celebrating volunteering worldwide. The association has members in 95 countries (Govaart and colleagues, 2001, 23), half of these countries have national or/and regional volunteer centres (IAVE, 2009). The European Volunteer Centre (CEV) includes 62 national and regional volunteer centres in 27 European countries (Hal and colleagues 2004; CEV, 2009). One question that has occupied me since IYV 2001 is as follows:

- *What factors led to the development of volunteering infrastructure in many countries, countries with widely varying institutional settings?*

In many countries, local volunteer centres play an important role in promoting volunteering, supporting volunteer-involving organisations and implementing volunteering policies. Bos and colleagues (2005) observe that little research has been conducted on volunteer centres. Their literature search in 2005 yielded only 14 significant articles on volunteer centres. The articles that are available are fragmented and unconnected to each other, and most concentrate on describing volunteer centres within their specific national contexts. This literature search was repeated in 2012, yielding seven new academic articles on volunteer centres. Most of these new articles had been initiated by this doctoral research project. The replication of the literature search was restricted by the disappearance of the McCurley database, which had been used as the starting point for the literature search in 2005. The 2012 search was therefore conducted on Google Scholar, using the same keywords as in 2005.

## 1.5 Societal need

Table 6 (based on Bos, 2008a, 4) presents the information about national and regional volunteer centres alongside the number of local volunteer centres existing in eight cases. Although the information presented in the figure may create the impression that volunteer centres constitute a strong, established and recognised field of activity, the reverse is true. As shown in Textbox 5, several cases reflect relatively vulnerable and poorly equipped local volunteering infrastructure.



Textbox 5: The state of local volunteer centres

*'Volunteer centres are poorly resourced. Some volunteer centres have unsuitable premises. Most are open for only part of the working week. Two-fifths have one FTE employee (or less), and another fifth have between one and two FTE employees. Most rely on volunteers, who in many cases outnumber the staff, to fill the gap. Many are not able to carry out all six core functions. Many are in a state of semi-permanent crisis; some exist under the threat of closure because of uncertainty about funding; and a number have had to close. There are currently nine complete gaps in coverage of unitary authorities; and seventeen, of district councils.'* (Volunteering England, 2006)

*According to a survey conducted by the German National Cooperation of Volunteer Centres (BAGFA)<sup>13</sup> in autumn 2001, only 10% of the meanwhile 190 German volunteer centres were older than five years (Ebert, Hartnuß, Rahn and Schaaf-Derichs, 2002, 40). In 2005, there were still 190 volunteer centres in Germany, although fewer than 100 of them had existed more than 2-3 years. Centres were constantly coming and going due uncertain finances (Jakob and Janning, 2001, 486). Some volunteer centre just barely managed to survive, largely because of the efforts of volunteer staff. In spite of this instability and rapid turnover, the increase in the number of German volunteer centres could be considered explosive (Janning and Stremlow, 2006).*

*In response to a motion in the Dutch House of Representatives, Margo Vliegthart, State Secretary for the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport ordered a four-year Temporary Measure to Stimulate Volunteering (TSV<sup>14</sup>) in 2001 (VWS, 2001). An impetus of EUR 12 million each year for local and provincial authorities was reserved in order to lay a solid foundation for a reinforced local volunteering infrastructure, which could be elaborated after the termination of the TSV. Of the 493 Dutch local authorities and 11 provincial authorities, 393 made use of the TSV (Phoelich, 2005, 16). Local authorities were particularly likely to apply the TSV in order to develop or strengthen volunteer centres. According to the National Committee for Policy on Volunteering,<sup>15</sup> which monitors the performance of the TSV, the base was still fragile. This committee's 2005 evaluation of the TSV states, 'The Committee realises that it will take five to ten years to settle an integral policy on volunteering in the local infrastructure. (...) Smaller municipalities are particularly likely to report problems with drafting volunteering policies, due lack of administrative capacity, finance or specific expertise. More than half of the municipalities indicated that they still needed support after the termination of the TSV' (Phoelich, 2005, 21).*

*'The internal differences between local (Dutch) volunteer centres in this zero-measurement make benchmarking impossible. Connections found between the available budgets, the number of employees and the activities performed are not reliable enough to serve as variables for benchmarking. Connections between variables appear to be based particularly on coincidence or specific local circumstances. Annual funding causes volunteer centres to experience difficulty in developing long-term policies' (Stubbe and van Dijk, 2006, 21).*

*'Although the Volunteer Center National Network (VCNN)<sup>16</sup> is one of the largest associations for the delivery of volunteer based services in the United States, possessing national scope, reach, and potential impact, we know surprisingly little about it. The present study has endeavoured to extend this knowledge and to evaluate for the first time the performance of this Network in relation to common standards' (Brudney, 2005a, 105).*

The volunteering infrastructure appears vulnerable and poorly equipped, and it lacks recognition. On the one hand, volunteer centres in different countries have discovered that promoting volunteering at the local level requires several functions in addition to brokerage. All of these functions should be delivered coherently (Osborne, 1999b, 77; Meijs and Stubbe, 2001, 37; Ebert and colleagues 2002, 60; Brudney, 2005b, 28; Howlett, 2008, 10; Bos and Meijs, 2008, 13; Bos, 2008b; Lorentzen and Dunstad, 2008, 13). On the other hand, very few volunteer centres are actually able to provide a broader spectrum of

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<sup>13</sup> Bundes Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Freiwilligenagenturen

<sup>14</sup> Tijdelijke Stimuleringsregeling Vrijwilligerswerk TSV

<sup>15</sup> Commissie Vrijwilligersbeleid

<sup>16</sup> The VCNN has (2003) more than 400 member volunteer centres across the United States.

functions (Osborne, 1999b, 81; Stubbe, 2001; Meijs and Stubbe, 2001, 38; Ebert and colleagues, 2002, 62; Devilee, 2005, 91; Terpstra and Jakobs, 2005, 12; Bos, 2006, 13; Stubbe and van Dijk, 2006; Howlett, 2008, 13; Lorentzen and Dunstad, 2008, 14). With regard to core functions, there is international consensus among volunteer centres on the necessity of brokerage, marketing, good-practice development, opportunity development, policy response and campaigning, and strategic development (Bos, 2008a).

- *Why do stakeholders and financiers appear particularly interested in brokerage and less in the long-term delivery of a number of coherent functions?*

In order to survive, volunteer centres are obliged to perform all kind of projects in addition to their core functions, with the consequence that much of the attention of their directors is occupied with tasks related to managing funding (Osborne, 1999b, 81). Due to projects and insufficient funding for the core functions, volunteer centres do not present a clear and recognisable image to the public. This situation results in major differences between volunteer centres and in a weak branch identity (Meijs and Stubbe, 2001, 38).

In various countries, national associations of local volunteer centres have started to develop common goals, operational standards and programmes to achieve these goals and standards (Ellis, 1989; NOV, 1998; Penberthy and Forster, 2004; Brudney, 2005a, 93; BAGFA, 2005). Many grant hallmarks to volunteer centres that have achieved the operational standards.

- *Why do stakeholders and financiers ascribe little importance to these hallmarks?*

In many countries, volunteer centres are expected to take the initiative to obtain such a hallmark. This could explain the modest number of volunteer centres that choose to invest their limited means in acquiring a hallmark. For example, only 47 of the 169 (NOV, 2010) local volunteer centres in the Netherlands and 53 of the 322<sup>17</sup> local volunteer centres in Germany possess hallmarks. The American Points of Light Foundation offers its member volunteer centres a self-assessment that measures the extent to which they meet certain standards for membership and pursue organisational and programmatic excellence. The responses of this measurement are collected periodically with the Volunteer Center Survey (Brudney, 2005a, 88). It is not known whether or to what extent these surveys contribute to the recognition of the local volunteering infrastructure.

The importance of a strong volunteering infrastructure has been expressed during several symbolic political opportunities. For example, it has been mentioned by politicians, as with Blair and Schröder in their inspiring speeches on 'The Third Way' (Salamon and colleagues, 2003; Howlett and Locke, 1999), by special established commissions, as with the English Aves Committee 1966-1970 (Howlett, 2008, 3), the German *Enquete-Kommission Bürgerschaftliches Engagement* 2002 (Enquete-Kommission, 2002), by political measures like the English Compact on Volunteering 1998 (Plowden, 2003), the Dutch Law on Social Development 2007 (Ministerie van VWS, 2007) or at special events, like the International Year of Volunteers 2001 (Davis Smith, 2003). In the cases addressed in this study, these types of speeches, commissions, measures and events have

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<sup>17</sup> Source: Kerstin Brandhorst, director of BAGFA (German National Association for volunteer centres) interviewed February 26, 2009

created a visible impetus for the establishment and reinforcement of the national and local volunteering infrastructure.

Unfortunately, the temporal character of such impetus often results in the decline and even closure of volunteer centres some years later. Perhaps the volunteering infrastructure has fallen to the same fate as have such 'soft issues' as civil society and civic engagement.

Politicians tend to turn to such issues during election campaigns. Once they are in office, their commitment to engagement and civil society can be maintained, as long as it remains connected to the general policy orientation. As soon as competition for resources emerges, prospects for civil society policy easily decrease. 'Hard issues', such as economic growth, employment, health care and crisis prevention, draw most of the attention (Hilger, 2008a, 195).

## **1.6 Construction of the dissertation**

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 addresses the relevance, aim, methodology, proceedings and restrictions of the research. It begins with a description of my search for literature about volunteering infrastructure and the core articles that I found. I then mention the consecutive steps that I have followed in the empirical research.

Chapter 3 provides a description of the contextual factors that have influenced volunteering since the Second World War and that have created the need for volunteering infrastructure. The first part of the chapter focuses on changes that influence the nature of and participation in volunteering. The second part shows how volunteer-involving organisations in each of the eight cases have reacted to these changes. The third part addresses the political context of these changes. Chapter 4 defines the phenomenon of volunteering infrastructure and suggests four patterns or perspectives that can be derived from various motives for establishing volunteering infrastructure. Based on empirical research, this chapter presents the development of volunteering infrastructure and expresses a definition of its core functions and levels of support. This definition is then developed into a template for a volunteering infrastructure.

Chapter 5 compares the functions actually provided by the volunteering infrastructure to this template, concluding that the actual state of practice in the various cases deviates from the template. Analysis of the causes of these differences reveals that, in addition to a number of basic, common factors (e.g. financial means, scale and the level of professional staff) that apparently bear a pervasive influence on the provision of volunteering-infrastructure functions, the observed differences could be affected by the patterns or perspectives on volunteering (as identified in Chapter 4). Chapter 6 elaborates on these perspectives and their impact on volunteering, concluding that each perspective expresses specific – and sometimes divergent – expectations of volunteering. This chapter also draws a connection between perspectives and political regimes: each of the specified political regimes appears to have a preference for a specific perspective on volunteering.

With regard to the future of volunteering infrastructure, Chapter 7 reveals a connection between the dominant perspective on volunteering in a given country and the functions

that the volunteering infrastructure must realise in order to answer the particular expectations of volunteering arising from that perspective. It concludes by specifying the most distinctive functions for the operations of the volunteering infrastructure according to each perspective on volunteering.

In Chapter 8, I present and discuss my conclusions, in addition to identifying the limitations of this research and providing recommendations for practice and for future research.

## 2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter begins by stating the relevance of this research. The objective, methodology, complexity and limitations of the study are outlined in the second through fifth sections. The questions underlying this research, have been presented in Chapter 1 and are marked with a bullet points.

### 2.1 Relevance of the research

The findings of this research are primarily intended to support practical workers (e.g. managers of local organisations that provide volunteer infrastructure). The results could help these professionals to understand and answer the various, often-diverging expectations that parties have with regard to volunteering. This study is also relevant for officials within governments (national, regional and local), foundations, charities and educational organisations involved in developing volunteer policies. Finally, this investigation can arouse academic interest and research with regard to the meaning of volunteering infrastructure for the development of volunteering.

*Practice.* It is impossible to deny the existence of volunteering infrastructure. In the eight cases addressed in this study, about 2000 local and regional agencies are providing volunteering infrastructure, and the membership registries of the European Volunteer Centre (CEV, 2009) and the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE, 2009) together include national volunteer centres (some with local and regional branches) from more than 100 countries. In all these countries, people working within the volunteering infrastructure (many in solitary positions) are struggling with similar professional, organisational and, even more seriously, financial questions. For these workers, this research offers insight and recognition with regard to the essence and the dynamics of their work. It also provides a frame of reference for developing the quality and funding of their organisations. The presentation of this research during the General Assembly Conference of the European Volunteer Centre in Malmö, October 12-14, 2009, attracted particular interest amongst the builders of volunteering infrastructure in 'New European Countries' (e.g. Romania, Poland, Albania, Croatia, Hungary and Slovakia). Until recently, these countries had been inclined to copy successful examples of volunteering infrastructure in the United States, England or the Netherlands. Because this research, they discovered that it is not obvious that these examples would work in their countries, which operate according to a different nonprofit regime. This study indicates the type of volunteering infrastructure that would correspond most closely with the expectations of the current nonprofit regimes prevailing in their countries.

Officials within national, regional and local governments, as well as in foundations, charities and educational systems that provide the financial means for the operations of the

volunteering infrastructure are responsible for the development of volunteering policies.<sup>18</sup> This study could help these officials to define the preconditions that must be available in order to achieve the goals of their volunteering policies.

*Policy.* A number of parties have a stake in the promotion of volunteering. The United Nations 2001 International Year of Volunteers (IYV) was an important catalyst for governments to express their interest in volunteering. 'Almost 130 countries took part [in the IYV], and over 500 committees were set up at national, regional and local level to plan and coordinate a host of activities and events' (Davis Smith, 2003, 24). In 2011, the European Council was celebrating the 10th anniversary of the United Nations IYV with the European Year of Volunteering, which involved activities and events in all member countries. One important lesson from the IYV is 'that government has a key role to play in funding the development of volunteering at national and local level' (Davis Smith, 2003, 25). Furthermore, participants in the IYV identified the reinforcement of the volunteering infrastructure as a key priority. By developing volunteering policies, governments often choose to realise this goal.

In addition to those developed by governments, volunteering policies are developed by many other parties too (e.g. community foundations, companies and educational systems that have an interest in or are important for the promotion of volunteering). For these parties, this study can provide information about which investments in the volunteering infrastructure contribute to the development and promotion of volunteering.

*Academic.* Despite the prevalence of policies and organisations that are engaged in the practice of volunteering infrastructure, the development and meaning of this topic has received little scientific attention. An international literature search (Bos and colleagues, 2005) yielded only 14 relevant articles on these themes. This study therefore provides a scientifically relevant contribution by exploring the development, the tasks, functions and performance of local organisations that provide volunteering infrastructure in eight cases.

Interest in volunteering infrastructure is increasing in the academic world (Harris and Rochester, 2001; Olk, Klein and Hartnuß, 2010; Rochester and colleagues, 2010). This dissertation can further arouse this interest and address the lack of academic research on volunteering infrastructure.

## 2.2 Aim of the research

There is a gap in literature with regard to the motives of governments and NPOs with regard to the promotion and support of volunteering since the 1970s. Furthermore, the literature fails to provide an explanation for why governments in dozens of countries – independent of each other – are expecting value from the same supporting measures: the establishment of volunteering infrastructure. Another gap in literature involves the actual phenomenon of volunteering infrastructure, with regard to its core functions, clients and performance, in addition to the preconditions that influence their performance.

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<sup>18</sup> 'A volunteering policy is a deliberate strategy adopted by a government (or other "external" body) to influence and stimulate volunteering and volunteerism'. 'Volunteer policies are policies within organisations that work with volunteers (analogous to HRM policies for paid staff)' (Hal and colleagues 2004, 22)

The results of this study provide insight into the following:

- The motives of governments and/or NPOs with regard to the promotion and support of volunteering (Chapter 3);
- The definition of volunteering infrastructure (Chapter 4);
- The actual functions provided by the volunteering infrastructure (Chapter 5);
- The four perspectives through which governments consider volunteering and the preference of political regimes for specific perspectives on volunteering (Chapter 6);
- The relationships between the four perspectives on volunteering and the functions provided by the volunteering infrastructure (Chapter 7).

## 2.3 Methodology

### 2.3.1 Explorative and qualitative research

This research is both explorative and qualitative. Given that previous research (Bos and colleagues, 2005) has revealed a true lack of academic literature on volunteering infrastructure in general, or a thorough description of the development of volunteering infrastructure in any specific country, I took my own quarter century of empirical knowledge of the development of Dutch volunteering infrastructure as the starting point for this research. I began the process making this knowledge explicit by describing the development of volunteering infrastructure in the Netherlands (Bos, 2006). In order to enhance, deepen and test this description, I then explored the development of volunteering infrastructure in seven other countries. These explorations were particularly valuable as a means of gaining a better understanding of volunteering infrastructure, without attempting to compile a comprehensive history of the development of volunteering infrastructure in all of these countries. My resources were too divergent and, in many respects, incomparable for such purposes. These explorations sharpened my understanding of volunteering infrastructure and generated eleven points along which to conduct an international comparison of volunteering infrastructure. One important result of this comparison is the recognition of six functions that characterise volunteering infrastructure in all eight of the countries addressed in this study. The explorations have also been a valuable source of inspiration. At various times, the dialogue with actors in these eight empirical countries has influenced the results of this research. These findings are overshadowed, however, by the finding that differences between the volunteering infrastructures in these countries prevent any actual comparison.

While exploring the development of volunteering infrastructure in Germany, I encountered a presentation by Heiner Keupp<sup>19</sup> (1999), given on the tenth anniversary of the Berlin Volunteer Centre. Keupp presents four discourses on civic engagement that correspond to my own research results regarding the four perspectives that the Dutch government attributed to volunteering policies between 1970 and 2005. In 2002, the German Study Commission on the 'Future of Civic Activities' (Enquete-Kommission, 2002, 82) published an exhaustive elaboration of three discourses on civic engagement, which largely concur with Keupp's presentation. In 2006, the Finnish researcher Peter Hilger

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<sup>19</sup> Dr. Heiner Keupp, in 1999 professor at the Institute for Psychology in Munich.

(2005b, 7; 2006b) expressed four discourses on civic engagement in a scheme that summarises the previously mentioned discourses on civic engagement and that provides a foundation for my practical experience. This scheme proved quite helpful in the explanation of differences between the volunteering infrastructures of the eight cases addressed in this study. I therefore chose not to conduct a thorough discourse analysis, using the scheme instead as a mental framework for presenting and explaining the various values that are assigned to volunteering from four perspectives.

The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (Salamon and colleagues, 2003), and particularly the distinction between four ideal types of nonprofit regimes that is elaborated within Social Origins Theory (Salamon and Anheier, 1998, 241), was especially valuable in this phase of my research. Linking the four perspectives on volunteering to Social Origins Theory allowed me to clarify the differences in the meanings that respective nonprofit regimes assign to volunteering.

According to Salamon and Anheier (1998), the eight countries that serve as cases in this research represent three different nonprofit regimes. Assuming that the expectations that parties within a specific nonprofit regime have from volunteering influence the operations of the volunteering infrastructure, this observation offers a well-reasoned argument that differences in nonprofit regimes result in different expectations from volunteering infrastructures.

This research shows that volunteering infrastructure is a highly complex phenomenon. The study describes the rich and diverse manifestations of volunteering infrastructures in eight cases, concluding with a normative argument for how to establish a volunteering infrastructure that meets the expectations of the perspective of volunteering that is dominant within a specific political regime.

## **2.3.2 The process of research**

### *2.3.2.1 Initial research*

Current literature on volunteering focuses on volunteering, volunteer management and volunteers, including the comprehensive study entitled 'Volunteers, a social profile' (Musick and Wilson, 2008). The literature has nonetheless neglected a specific corner of the volunteering world: the volunteering infrastructure. In the search for literature on volunteering infrastructure that was conducted at the onset of this research project, Bos and colleagues (2005) compiled a set of 60 articles and reports that deal with volunteer centres. To select articles on volunteer centres, they conducted a title search for the following terms:

- Volunteer centre(s)
- Volunteer centre(s)
- Volunteer bureau(x)(s)
- Voluntary support organization
- Broker
- Volunteer agency
- Management support organization
- Community support organization
- Voluntary service centre



- Social service agency

The search yielded only 11 publications (Ellis, 1989; Graff, 1997; Connor, Kadel-Taras and Vinokur-Kaplan, 1999; Osborne, 1999; Meijs and Stubbe, 2001; Jakob and Janning, 2001; Ebert and colleagues, 2002; Palma and Paginin, 2002; Brudney, 2003; Bos, 2004) about volunteering infrastructure that were academically relevant, addressing the following five topics about volunteer centres:

1. *The history of volunteer centres*: Why, when and how are volunteer centres founded? (e.g. Ellis, 1989; Osborne, 1999b; Palma and Paginin, 2002; Ebert and colleagues, 2002; Brudney, 2003; Bos, 2004)
2. *The functions of volunteer centres in society*: Do volunteer centres support only volunteers, or do they extend their services to volunteer-involving organisations as well? Do (can) they play a broader role in society with regard to the promotion and support of volunteering? (e.g. Connor and colleagues, 1999; Osborne, 1999b; Jakob and Janning, 2001; Ebert and colleagues, 2002; Brudney, 2003)
3. *Volunteer centre operations*: What are the tasks and functions of volunteer centres, and how do internal organisational processes work? (e.g. ; Ellis, 1989; Graff, 1997; Osborne, 1999b; Jakob and Janning, 2001; Meijs and Stubbe, 2001; Palma and Paginin, 2002; Ebert and colleagues, 2002; Brudney, 2003)
4. *Third-party policies regarding volunteer centres*: What measures do governments take to stimulate volunteering in general, and what actions are undertaken to establish volunteer centres? (e.g. Meijs and Stubbe, 2001; Palma and Paginin, 2002; Bos, 2004)
5. *Future issues and challenges for volunteer centres*: Which changes in society influence the direction of volunteer centre actions? What are the challenges and opportunities for volunteer centres? (e.g. Graff, 1997; Connor et al, 1999; Osborne, 1999b; Jakob and Janning, 2001; Meijs and Stubbe, 2001; Ebert and colleagues, 2002)

For my research, I chose to elaborate on the second topic: the functions of volunteer centres in society.

### 2.3.2.2 Finding a research focus

The literature search identified 11 core articles about the development of volunteer centres in America, Canada, England, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. These articles provided a starting point for collecting practical information about the development of volunteer centres in the countries addressed in the study. These articles also provided access to new literature, researchers and research institutes in the area of volunteering infrastructure.

Participation in the annual BAGFA<sup>20</sup> conferences between 2005 and 2009 provided a source of information of volunteer centres in Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg and Austria. It also brought me into contact with German, Finnish and Norwegian researchers and research institutes focusing on volunteering infrastructure. In order to obtain further information, I made appeals through the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE), the European Volunteer Centre (CEV), national volunteer centres, the National

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<sup>20</sup> Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freiwilligenagenturen [German National Cooperation of Volunteer Centres]

Networks of volunteer centres and volunteer-centre employees whom I have met abroad over time.

In 2005 I concluded that only the United States, Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Norway offer sources of information that meet the criteria of scientific support and global survey. It is probably not a coincidence that all of these countries are participants in the Johns Hopkins' Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project. This project, which involves 46 participant countries, is 'the largest systematic effort ever undertaken to analyse into the scope, structure, financing, and impact of the nonprofit activity throughout the world in order to improve our knowledge and enrich our theoretical understanding of this sector, and to provide a sounder basis for both public and private action towards it' (Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, 2010). The project also collects information on volunteering. The involvement of volunteers is a main feature of the nonprofit sector. In each of the participating countries, research institutes study national volunteering. These studies provided me with important scientific information. Then publications of the Johns Hopkins Project place the results of all these national studies within a global framework.

To develop a better understanding of the social context of volunteering in the eight countries addressed in my research, I also studied the public policies and academic views on volunteering in these countries.

### *2.3.2.3 Invitational Conference on Volunteering Infrastructure*

The eight descriptions of the development of volunteer centres generated eleven points<sup>21</sup> along which to compare volunteer centres. I invited researchers<sup>22</sup> in the eight countries to write articles answering a number of questions with regard to these eleven points of comparison in their respective countries, in addition to providing feedback on my description of the development of volunteer centres in their country. With the exception of the Italian researcher,<sup>23</sup> all of the researchers honoured this invitation and participated in an invitational conference in order to discuss these eleven points of comparison.<sup>24</sup>

The invitational conference was held on April 24-25, 2008 in Aalsmeer, the Netherlands. To the best of the participants' knowledge, this was the first conference ever to offer scientific researchers the opportunity to compare and discuss the development of volunteer-

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<sup>21</sup> Policy contexts that influence the operations of volunteer centres; type of support that volunteer centres provide (or aim to provide); core functions; main financiers; year of establishment and number of volunteer centres; independent or affiliated organisation; national networks; incorporation of common goals and standards; national network surveys of volunteer-centre performance; financial and organisational challenges during the development process; sufficiency of equipment.

<sup>22</sup> **Denmark:** Lars Skov Henriksen, Department Sociology, Social Work and Organization, Aalborg University; **England:** Steven Howlett, Centre for the study of Voluntary and Community Activity, Roehampton University; **Finland:** Peter Hilger, Department of Political Science, University of Helsinki; **Germany:** Gisela Jakob, Fachhochschule Darmstadt, Department Social Pedagogy and Jan-Hendrik Kamlage, Bremen International School of Social Sciences; **Netherlands:** Lucas Meijs, RSM Erasmus University, Department of Business-Society Management, Rotterdam; **Norway:** Håkon Lorentzen and Line Dugstad, Institute for Social Research, Oslo; **United States:** Jeff Brudney, Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University

<sup>23</sup> The lack of Italian academic resources on volunteering infrastructure was partly compensated by a publication of Spes (2005, 251), my own literature research (Bos, 2008b) and personal contacts with colleagues working in the volunteering infrastructures of Lazio and Milan

<sup>24</sup> These eleven points of comparison play an important role throughout this study.

ing infrastructure in different countries. All of the researchers considered the development of volunteering infrastructure an underestimated but relevant issue, in their own countries, as well as internationally. The eleven points of comparison offered sufficient common ground upon which the researchers could understand each other during this first meeting, and they facilitated the international comparison of volunteer centres (Bos, 2008a). The researchers at the invitational conference stated that volunteer centres are everywhere, agreed about six core functions (i.e. brokerage, marketing volunteering, good-practice development, developing volunteering opportunities, policy response & campaigning and strategic development of volunteering) that characterise local volunteering infrastructure and concluded that volunteer centres operate in countries with different institutional contexts.

This statement was accompanied by the observation that few volunteer centres have access to the equipment necessary to provide all six of these functions adequately

The six functions are considered cohesive and inextricably connected with each other. Countries are increasingly defining the core functions of volunteering infrastructure in policy documents or white papers. In many cases, those who draft these documents and papers (national umbrella organisations or national governments) are not responsible for providing funding for local infrastructure. In light of this situation, the entities that do provide funding for volunteers are likely to be unaware of the core functions.

The conclusions and articles produced for the invitational conference were posted on the website of the European Volunteer Centre.<sup>25</sup> In follow-up to this conference, I decided to elaborate on the four perspectives on volunteering (as mentioned in Section 2.2), linking these perspectives to the Social Origin Theory developed by Salamon and Anheier (1998).

#### *2.3.2.4 Testing and sharpening the research findings*

In 2008, I used the knowledge on local volunteering infrastructure that I had acquired to prepare an article entitled 'Using Volunteer Centres to Build Civil Society' (Bos and Meijs, 2008). I presented this article at the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual ARNOVA<sup>26</sup> Conference in Philadelphia (November 2008). I used this conference to discuss the way in which I have addressed my research topic, to discover gaps in my research and to locate important researchers or articles of which I was not yet aware. My fellow researchers reacted positively and with considerable interest and encouragement. The article was nominated for ARNOVA's 'Best Paper Award'.

On January 27, 2009, I presented and discussed this paper in a meeting involving 30 staff members of MOVISIE, the Dutch centre for social development (a kind of national volunteer centre). This was followed by several similar presentations and discussions:

- March 5, 2009 – also at the invitation of MOVISIE – during a meeting with 20 representatives of local/regional volunteer centres in the Netherlands and Croatia

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<sup>25</sup> From 2008 till 2012. After a reconstruction of the CEV-website the articles migrated to the site of VIA (2012)

<sup>26</sup> Association for Research on Nonprofit Organisations and Voluntary Action

- March 19, 2009 in Frankfurt, Germany, at the invitation of BAGFA, as a contribution to *Perspektivenwerkstatt*, a national conference on the future challenges of national, regional and local volunteer centres in Germany
- October 15, 2009 in Malmö, Sweden, as keynote speaker at the General Assembly Conference of the European Volunteer Centre, based on the following theme: 'An enabling volunteering infrastructure in Europe'
- October 19, 2009 in Halle an der Saale, Germany, at the 14<sup>th</sup> BAGFA Symposium, during a workshop entitled 'Profiles of volunteer centres in Europe in comparison'
- November 3, 2009, in Driebergen, the Netherlands, at the national conference for Dutch local volunteer centres, during the workshop 'Including everybody in volunteering or opting for quality?'

## 2.4 Selection of cases

The case-study approach was selected as the methodology for this research. It is thus a case study on volunteering infrastructure. In order to explain and define the phenomenon of volunteering infrastructure, I selected eight cases, describing for each the institutional arrangements that have created volunteering infrastructure. Each of the cases involves a country with a nonprofit regime (Salamon and Anheier, 1998).

This approach yielded sufficient data for developing a definition of volunteering infrastructure and describing six functions that are characteristic of organisations that provide volunteering infrastructure in the cases included in this research (Invitational Conference). I presented this definition and description of core functions in various forums and discussed them with practitioners and researchers involved in volunteering infrastructure, both in and outside of the cases involved in this study. Despite the general consensus regarding this general definition, further research revealed both qualitative and quantitative differences in the operations of the volunteering infrastructure in the eight cases.

I developed two important explanations for these differences:

- The volunteering policies of the regimes in the cases involved in this research express specific expectations on volunteering. I developed these expectations into four distinct perspectives on volunteering. Support for each perspective imposes specific demands on organisations that provide volunteering infrastructure. Through its preference for a specific perspective on volunteering, a regime determines the performance of the volunteering infrastructure.
- Individual nonprofit regimes (with the exception of statist regimes) exhibit specific preferences for one of these four perspectives on volunteering.

In my opinion, the diversity amongst the cases with regard to preferred perspectives and nonprofit regimes (Tables 7 and 8, respectively) sufficiently substantiates the validity of these explanations to justify their generalisation and to predict the preferences of other countries for specific perspectives on volunteering, based on their prevailing nonprofit regimes. I distinguish between dominant (officially supported) and recognised (welcomed without obligation) perspectives, as the preferences of a regime can change and some regimes may support multiple perspectives simultaneously. The goal of this research is to identify and explain differences in the volunteering policies of nonprofit regimes. In sepa-

rate research, it should also be interesting to examine and compare the visions on civil society.

Table 7: Preferred perspectives on volunteering in the eight cases

Preferences in the cases	Perspectives			
	Welfare	Democracy	Economy	Community
Dominant	England Germany Italy Netherlands United States			Denmark Finland Norway
Recognised		Denmark England Finland Germany Italy Netherlands Norway	England Germany Netherlands	Germany Italy Netherlands

Table 8: Current nonprofit regimes in the eight cases

Cases	Nonprofit regime		
	Liberal	Social Democratic	Corporatist
	United States	Denmark Finland Norway	England Germany Italy Netherlands

### 2.5 Limitations of the research

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first scientific study of local volunteering infrastructure development. As described in the preface, it was undertaken by a pracademic<sup>27</sup>, an active practitioner in the area of the research subject, with the goal of filling a gap in the academic knowledge about volunteering infrastructure with a doctoral research project. The development of volunteering infrastructure is relatively new, having begun around the 1970s<sup>28</sup>. The topic has thus far received little academic attention. As stated above, the modest body of available literature on the research topic originates from a limited number of key figures, which are concerned with promoting volunteering in a limited number of countries. A high percentage of the information that was found includes empirical, one-sided 'assignment' reports (e.g. annual reports) and single-function articles. The number of international forums within which to submit the findings of such research is also limited. Language limitations restricted me to the use of resources published in English, German and Dutch.

<sup>27</sup> Wikipedia: 'A pracademic is someone who is both an academic and an active practitioner in a subject area'.

<sup>28</sup> The Association of Voluntary Action Scholars (AVAS) was been established during the same period. In 1990, the association was renamed the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA). ARNOVA edits the *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, which was first published in 1972 as the *Journal of Voluntary Action Research*.

## 2.6 Conclusion

This research is relevant for practical workers (e.g. managers of volunteer centres), officials involved in the development of volunteering policies and academics researching the meaning of volunteering infrastructure for the development of volunteering. The aim of the research is to fill the gap in literature regarding the motives of governments and/or NPOs to promote and support volunteering, to explain why governments in many countries have positive expectations of volunteering infrastructure (both local and in the broader context) and to examine the phenomenon of volunteering infrastructure. The research is explorative and qualitative, and it follows three lines.

The first research line focuses on the various parties, as well as on their - sometimes diverging - interests in volunteering.

The second line is based on the researcher's quarter century of empirical knowledge of the development of Dutch volunteering infrastructure, as the initial literature search on volunteer centres yielded only 11 core articles. Of the five topics distilled from these core articles, the choice was made to elaborate on 'functions volunteer centres have in society' as the topic of this dissertation. The development of volunteer centres in eight countries was described according to the author's personal knowledge and experience, combined with the sources of information identified in the initial literature survey. The public policies and academic views on volunteering in these countries were studied as well. During the study, collaboration with researchers in the eight countries ultimately resulted in a definition of volunteering infrastructure and its core functions.

The third research line elaborates on four perspectives on volunteering. The analysis of empirical knowledge concerning the development of volunteering infrastructure in the Netherlands generated the insight that Dutch governmental policies value volunteering from four different perspectives. Linking these perspectives with the Social Origins Theory developed by Salamon and Anheier (1998) made it clear that different nonprofit regimes assign different meanings to volunteering.

Shifts in the relative emphasis on the three research lines throughout the course of the dissertation attest to the complexity to the research.

The knowledge acquired in the research process was tested and sharpened through discussion in various forums. The study was subject to several limitations, including the fact that the topic has received very little academic attention as evidenced by the one-sided character of the available empirical information, the scarcity of forums in which to present findings and the logistical limitation to resources published in English, German and Dutch.

## 3 VOLUNTEERING FIELD IN MOTION

Although the first volunteer centre was established in the United States (Minneapolis, Minnesota) in 1919 (Brudney, 2005a), the development of volunteer centres (in either the US or other countries) did not begin in earnest until the 1970s (Table 6). Because the purpose of volunteer centres is to promote, support and reevaluate volunteering in general, this chapter focuses on the context of volunteering. It describes changes that have taken place since the 1970s with regard to both the nature of volunteering and participation in volunteering (Section 3.1). These changes have affected the current definition of volunteering (Section 3.2), as well as organisations that involve volunteers in their operations (Section 3.3). One prominent effect of these changes is the need for coordination and professionalisation of volunteer recruitment.

### 3.1 Changes in the nature of and participation in volunteering

This section outlines three changes that have taken place in the nature of and participation in volunteering since the Second World War. The first change involves the *decline* of volunteers in traditional organisations, and the second concerns various *transformations* from old to new styles of volunteering. The final change to be discussed involves *increases* in volunteers that emerged spontaneously in former communistic countries that were aiming to build a civil society, as well as those that were 'forced' or led as a means of maintaining the standard for the required number of volunteers within organisations.

#### 3.1.1 Decline

A number of societal developments taking place after the Second World War affected both the nature of volunteering and the rate of volunteer participation. Olk (1989) describes a change in the structure of volunteering (*Strukturwandel des Ehrenamtes*), as manifest in a decline of volunteers in traditional organisations, accompanied by an increase in a new type of volunteers with new motives, against the background of modernisation and individualisation. The rising level of prosperity after the war decreased the influence of social environments (family, neighbourhood, church and work) on the individual life course. A contrasting development involved an increase of individual freedom and self-determination, combined with an increasing desire on the part of individuals to design their own life stories (Jakob, 1993). The state of belonging to a social cultural environment (a collective) became less of an impetus for engagement. Instead, people began to look for topics or projects that would offer opportunities for involvement and participation, and which would match their own level of commitment.

Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003) distinguish between collective and reflexive styles of volunteering, qualifying volunteer involvement as a biographically embedded reality. Dekker (1999) defines volunteer involvement as an expression of civic engagement and a creator

of social capital. Putnam (2000, 283) names four factors that have contributed to the decline in civic engagement and social capital since the 1950s:

- Pressures of time and money, including the special pressures on two-career families;
- Suburbanisation, commuting and urban sprawl;
- The privatisation of leisure through electronic entertainment, particularly television (According to Putnam, this factor could account for 25 per cent of the decline in civic engagement and social capital);
- Generational change: '[...] the slow, steady, and ineluctable replacement of the long civic generation by their less involved children and grandchildren'. Putnam considers this as the most important factor, which could account for half of the overall decline.

Using data from the European and the World Values Surveys, Dekker and Broek (2005, 55) conduct a comparative, longitudinal test of Putnam's study (2000). Their research reveals no evidence of a general decline in involvement in voluntary associations, political involvement, social trust and happiness in the US or in other Western countries. The data that they used suggest that involvement either remained stable or increased.

### **3.1.2 Transformation**

While Putnam (2000, 60) attributes the decline in civic engagement and social capital among Americans to their decreasing participation in the organised life of their communities, Wuthnow (1998, 4) and Keupp (2003, 13) argue that involvement in these communities is changing, rather than simply declining. Wuthnow examines the shifting character of civic participation and considers the innovative ways in which Americans reach out to one another, searching for the factors that tend to alienate them from community organisations. Using the stories of individual Americans to explore the contemporary meanings of community ties and civic engagement, Wuthnow discovers that traditional, long-term memberships in hierarchical organisations are being replaced by experiments with 'looser, more sporadic, ad hoc connections'. Wuthnow argues that these 'permeable structures' (or 'loose connections') are shaping the ways in which individual Americans work, live, relate to one another and volunteer. These structures demand flexibility and less commitment. Personal schedules have become less certain, and relationships have begun to shift more frequently. Wuthnow observes that the need of individuals to form intentional relationships with others has increased, and it has generated innovative forms of civic participation (e.g. special-interest groups, political action committees and single-issue organisations). Many of these forms of participation take place outside of 'the organisations of the past' (Wuthnow, 1998, 5). In their volunteering, citizens currently appear to be seeking opportunities to realise their 'enlightened self-interest' (Tocqueville, 2004 [1835], 147). In *Better Together*, Putnam (2003) later affirms Wuthnow's observations, describing 'civic undertakings' across the United States that connect people to each other, generate relationships of interpersonal trust and build communities.

The presence of such civic undertakings and 'loose ties', along with their implications for strong communities, have been observed in the Netherlands as well. Research conducted in the Netherlands (Hurenkamp, Tonkens and Duyvendak, 2006; Hurenkamp and Rooduijn, 2009) provides evidence for a multitude of citizen initiatives and examines the



circumstances that make them flourish. Analysing these initiatives, the researchers discover differences in the degree in which they communicate with other organisations and with the government. They use differences in the degree of contact with the outside world to distinguish four types of citizen initiatives (Hurenkamp and colleagues, 2006, 32; Table 9). The forms of volunteering described by Wuthnow (1998), Putnam (2003), and Hurenkamp and colleagues (2006) indicate the emergence of new 'bottom up' initiatives that express personal and community involvement, solidarity, reciprocity and citizenship.

Table 9: Types of citizen initiatives (Hurenkamp and colleagues, 2006, 32)

	Much external contact (woven)	Little external contact (gliding)
Much internal contact (tight)	<b>Federative initiatives</b>	<b>Cooperative initiatives</b>
Little internal contact (loose)	<b>Networking initiatives</b>	<b>Light initiatives</b>

Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003, 167) affirm the growing conviction that volunteering in the area of service delivery is not so much declining as it is undergoing a radical change, from 'classical', 'traditional', and 'old' to 'modern' or 'new'; from 'collectivist' to 'individualist'; from 'membership-based' to 'programme-based'; from 'institutionalised' to 'self-organised'. Against the background of broader social and cultural transformations that are being driven by modernisation, Hustinx (2001, 65) interprets existing accounts of qualitative changes in motivational bases and patterns of volunteering (Table 10).

Table 10: Typology of volunteering (Hustinx, 2001, 65)

	<b>Classic Volunteerism</b>	<b>New Volunteerism</b>
Culture	Identifies with traditional cultural norms	Individualisation
Choice of organisation	Based on traditional cultural identities Great loyalty Delegated leadership Solid structure	Personal interest Weak ties Decentralised structure Loose networks
Choice of field of action	Based on: Traditional cultural identities Inclusion and exclusion	Perception of new biographical similarities Taste for topical issues Dialogue between global and local
Choice of activity	Based on: Traditional cultural identities Needs of the organisation Idealism	Balance between personal preference and organisation's needs Cost/benefit analysis Pragmatic
Length and intensity of commitment	Long term (unlimited in time) Regular Unconditional	Short-term (clearly limited in time) Irregular or erratic Conditional
Relationship with the Beneficiary	Unilateral, altruistic, selfless	Reciprocal

Hilger (2006b, 13) provides a comparable typology in the schema of 'old and new engagement'. Merrill (2006) identifies six general patterns that affect volunteering worldwide (Textbox 6). According to Merrill, these patterns also indicate that volunteering is undergoing a transformation.

Textbox 6: Global patterns that affect volunteering (Merrill, 2006)

- Concern for the effects of time pressure on individuals
- Variations in the definition and value of volunteering from country to country
- Demographic changes and volunteer programmes that concentrate on the extremes of the age continuum
- The importance of pluralistic approaches to recruitment, engagement and management
- Recognition of the role and importance of reciprocity, community, solidarity and citizenship
- The role of information technology in volunteering

An analysis of future trends in the Netherlands (Dekker, Hart and Faulk, 2007) summarises the developments mentioned above in terms of five social processes (Textbox 7) that are likely to affect the popularity and design of volunteer effort between now and 2015.

Textbox 7: Societal processes affecting volunteering through 2015 (Dekker and colleagues, 2007)

**Individualisation:** shifting from collective to reflexive styles of volunteering; volunteering as an expression of personal involvement and choices  
**Informality:** loosening social ties ('loose connections'); increasing network organisations, equalisation of authority relationships and manners; increasing expression of participation as *democracy from below*  
**Information technology:** changes in communication and interaction due to automation and IT change  
**Intensification:** strengthening and personalisation of the perception component (as an antithesis of rut, monotony, herd behaviour and predictability); refers to an increasing need for variety and change  
**Internationalisation:** changing of cultural institutions due to migration, economic globalisation, European integration and the spread of an international culture; institutions also enter into greater, supra-national connections

All of these transformations have far-reaching consequences for organisations that involve volunteers. On the one hand, they generate a shortage of traditional volunteers (who are willing to make lifelong and demanding commitments). On the other hand, they lead to the emergence of a new type of volunteer who offer their effort in ways that are more sporadic, temporary and non-committal. The willingness of these volunteers to participate seems more dependent on personal interests and needs than it is on an ethic of service or a sense of obligation to the community. In their quest for self-realisation, volunteers demand freedom of choice and a clear set of tasks that lead towards tangible results (Hustinx, 2008). In order to keep volunteers involved, activities must be spectacular, relevant, brief, clearly delineated and entertaining. For example, trendy problems or contemporary hot issues (e.g. HIV/Aids, refugees, homelessness, and environmental policy) are gaining popularity over long-term volunteer effort for older or disabled people (Wuthnow, 1998; Daal, 1994; Hustinx and Lammertyn, 2003). For this reason, activities that involve equal matches between volunteers as buddies, pals or mentors and people with chronic illness or disabilities, refugees, at-risk students, assimilation-course participants or other specific target groups have become very popular in the Netherlands (Zonderop, 2006).

The programme-based<sup>29</sup> formula offers volunteers the opportunity to determine along with their 'pals' when, where and how they will perform their joint activities. In the North American context, in which programme-based forms of volunteer management are highly prevalent (in contrast to the strong tradition of membership management in Europe),

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<sup>29</sup> Meijs and Ten Hoorn (2008, 38) distinguish programme management (which focuses on specific operational tasks) from membership management (which focuses on the volunteers themselves).

scholars have observed a tendency to volunteer alone, without the need to establish enduring ties to other volunteers (Hustinx, 2008, 4). One example is the Hands-On Network (Brudney and colleagues, 2008), which has also been active in the Netherlands since 2008 (Nederland Cares, 2008). Volunteers are increasingly performing their unpaid work without the strong and lasting membership ties in which such activities have traditionally been embedded. These more individualised forms of volunteering seem to be undermining volunteering 'from within' (Hustinx, 2008, 5).

### **3.1.3 Increase**

In 1989, Ellis (1989, 11) proposed that the world of volunteers had expanded to include categories that might appear controversial to those who believe that a volunteer is simply an 'unpaid worker'. Examples included 'court-ordered' volunteers (who perform a certain number of hours of volunteer work in lieu of fines or jail terms), 'transitional' volunteering (which allows people in the mental healthcare system who are not ready for paid employment to gain self-confidence while making a meaningful contribution to an organisation), unemployed volunteers (in programmes designed to retain their potential for retraining in order to enter new job paths or prevent social exclusion), volunteer youth-service programmes (which promote service learning or community service in order to ensure that all young adults contribute to their communities). Zimmeck (2010, 89) describes a comparable expansion of the definition of volunteering in England.

In this context Hustinx, Meijs and Ten Hoorn (2009, 257) introduce the notion of 'guided volunteering'. Guided volunteering refers to new forms of volunteering in which various parties (e.g. schools, courts, labour unions, government agencies) initiate, arrange or even force the participation (or the conditions for participation). The notion also refers to a planned and calculated approach that volunteer-involving organisations (e.g. sport associations) can implement to reward the active participation or sanction the non-participation of their members, in order to maintain the standard for the required number of volunteers. Both forms (i.e. expansion and guidance) result in an increase of volunteers. According to Hustinx (2008, 6), this approach to volunteering, which uses authority to invite or enforce participation, threatens to shrink volunteering 'from the outside'.

Corporate citizenship,<sup>30</sup> as expressed by the *corporate social responsibility (CSR)* policies of commercial companies, can be identified as a factor that both *increases* and *transforms* volunteering. Activities related to CSR include a combination of five elements (the 5 M'-s): money, manpower, means, media and mass (Meijs and van der Voort, 2003). One of these elements (manpower) refers to employee volunteering, in which businesses stimulate their employees to invest time and expertise into nonprofit organisations as volunteers (Meijs, 2008). In the Netherlands and Germany (Dekker and Seters, 2008; Placke, 2008), employee volunteering can be an important expression of CSR if businesses use their CSR policies to encourage their employees to discover volunteering, CSR can contribute to the increase of volunteers. If employees replace their current voluntary activities for employee volunteering, however, it is more appropriate to say that CSR is transforming that character of volunteering.

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<sup>30</sup> During the 2008 World Economic Forum in Davos, Microsoft founder Bill Gates accentuated the role of enterprises as 'corporate citizens' in a globalising world.

Substantial opportunities for volunteer participation are widely available in the former communist-bloc countries, which are currently in the process of building up a civil society. The collapse of communism since 1989 has significantly contributed to the re-discovery of the concept of *civil society* in Western political philosophy. Opposition movements played an important role in establishing civil society. Examples include groups that fought to establish Free Trade Unions in Poland (Dzuibka, 1994, 88) and the church-based Peace Movement in East Germany (Enquete-Kommission, 2002, 225). Although these opposition movements can be considered as an initial successful expression of volunteer involvement, volunteering in the more general sense is not yet prevalent in the former communist-bloc countries. One precondition for the development of a civil society or democracy is that citizens must have 'civic skills' at their disposal, and they must be willing to accept certain standards and values (defined as 'civic virtues'). According to Dzuibka (1994, 103) the development of democracy and the establishment of civil society, which took centuries in Western society, cannot be compressed into decades or years in countries undergoing reform. Furthermore, it is unrealistic to expect these countries to accomplish intentionally that which emerged largely as the unintended result of decentralised decisions in the West.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall<sup>31</sup> in 1989 was followed by the collapse of the strong forms of politically coloured engagement that had existed in East Germany. The institutional transfer from West Germany was less successful. Political parties, employers' organisations, current associations and churches found it difficult to acquire and retain members (Ebert and Hesse, 2002).

Citizens in a segregated society often tend to consider democracy only as a means and less as a goal in itself. For this reason, some groups within society are less interested in democratising the existing political structures, than in gratifying directly their material needs and desires, even if this means to take an undemocratic regime into the bargain (Dzuiba, 1994, 103).

On the other hand, these circumstances offer the opportunity for new initiatives and innovative projects that can activate and preserve the available volunteer potential. In major cities, the movement towards civil society can generate rapid growth in the establishment of new associations. Innovative projects with a high degree of volunteer involvement are brought into being. In order to take advantage of these opportunities, it is necessary for a society to have an independent infrastructure for volunteer involvement that goes beyond sectors (Ebert and Hesse, 2002).

Volunteering is currently being developed in Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and similar countries (Hal and colleagues, 2004). As a consequence in these countries volunteer centres have been established to support volunteering. Volunteer centres from most of these countries are now affiliated with the European Volunteer Centre. A number of West European countries are providing inspiration and support to help with the further development of volunteering infrastructure. For example, the Netherlands Institute for Social Development (MOVISIE) provided support to its counterparts in Poland, Romania and Croatia. The expectation is that volunteer involvement will take root and grow within these countries.

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<sup>31</sup> *Die Wende*

On the international level United Nations Volunteers is a driving force with regard to the promotion of the universal values of volunteering for global well-being (UNV, 2011a).

**3.1.4 Summary**

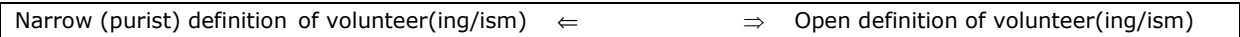
Volunteer involvement is experiencing considerable movement. It is declining in some respects, transforming in others and even increasing in yet others. These shifts can be observed at the individual, organisational and societal levels. The influence of social and political developments is evident. In addition to the organisations that involve volunteers, a number of other parties have started to voice their own expectations with regard to volunteering. The following three parties can be distinguished, each with its own expectations of volunteering:

- *Organisations*, which expect to find the best possible volunteers at the lowest possible cost in order to provide services and activities;
- *Individual citizens*, who expect to find the best possible volunteering experiences at the lowest possible cost;
- *Third parties* (Haski-Leventhal, Meijs and Hustinx, 2009), including governments that promote civic involvement for different goals; educational systems (service learning, community service); companies (corporate social responsibility); corporations (vital and safe communities); judges ( alternative sentences); therapists (social integration) and service clubs (community services). All of these parties use volunteering to achieve their own purposes at the lowest possible cost.

The presence of these numerous and divergent expectations highlights the strong need to elaborate on the definition of volunteering. Through the years, definitions have become increasingly comprehensible. The Volunteerism Continuum (Figure 1) was developed by Graff (1997, 32) with the goal of increasing our understanding of this process of growth. According to Graff,

At one end of this Volunteerism Continuum a centre<sup>32</sup> would confine its mandate and its services to volunteers and volunteerism where the term 'volunteers' is defined in the narrow sense of un-coerced persons who, for the most part, work through community agencies and organizations, primarily to benefit others. At the other end of the continuum, a centre would work with and serve many different categories of (unpaid, and maybe even stipended) community service workers and/or promote, facilitate, and support all forms of self-help, community development and citizen participation activity (Graff,1997, 32).

Figure 1: Volunteerism Continuum



<sup>32</sup> Volunteer Centre

### 3.2 Changing visions on the definition of volunteering

This section describes a number of international developments that offer evidence to support Graff's Volunteering Continuum. In 1972, the two first local volunteer centres in the Netherlands were faced with a crucial question during their experimental period: 'What does our founder (the Ministry of Culture and Social Work, or CRM<sup>33</sup>) mean with the term *volunteering*, and which factors can affect volunteering positively or negatively?' The parties involved with the two local volunteer centres associated stricter definitions with a more negative image of volunteering in society, and they proposed classifying volunteers into two categories:

- People who are available to help others who are in need for help
- People with a common interest who are helping themselves and each other

In 1972, people who fell into the second category were not usually regarded as volunteers; they were more likely to be considered members, participants, contributors or employees (Fick, 1974, 8). The distinction between these two categories actually anticipated the classification of voluntary organisations into *service delivery, mutual support and campaigning* organisations (Handy, 1988) and the distinction in *service and expressive functions* of NPOs (Salamon and colleagues 2003, 22; Textbox 1). In a policy document, Ministry of CRM (CRM, 1975b, 3) defines volunteering as 'an expression of self-motivation and participation', finding that 'citizens must have the opportunity to shape their own society'. With this document, the Ministry adopted a broad definition that includes both of the categories mentioned above.

In light of the expanded realm of volunteering (Section 3.3.3), Ellis (1989, 11) advocates a vision of volunteerism that encompasses the broadest possible definition, and she encourages volunteer centres to concern themselves 'with any potential resource in a community – anything that can provide assistance with a minimum of real dollars'.

According to Merrill (2006, 10):

The definition of volunteering and the use of the term *volunteer* vary within and between countries and settings. Volunteering, at different times and in different places, is used to (a) define the setting of work, such as formal or informal; (b) define the value of work and/or (c) define the scope of work, such as reaching out beyond the confines of employment and normal responsibilities or performing activities that benefit others.

Here I make a general remark about the use of the terms *participation* and *volunteering*. Policy documents are increasingly mentioning participation and volunteering in a single breath (Hal and colleagues, 2004; University of Santiago de Compostela, 2009; Canada Statistics, 2009; 'Volunteering and Participation Portal (2009)' in Australia). Participation is a catch-all term with different meanings. For example, participation refers to service delivery; to involvement in decisions; to the social inclusiveness of individual citizens who are at risk of social isolation, and to joining in civic undertakings that:

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<sup>33</sup> *Ministerie van Cultuur en Maatschappelijk Werk (CRM)*

[...] involve making connections among people, establishing bonds of trust, and understanding, building community. In other words, they all involve creating social capital: developing networks of relationships that weave individuals into groups and communities (Putnam, 2003, 1).

Chapter 6 will elaborate on these different meanings.

Although Germany is still far from developing a uniform term for volunteering, the German language is rich with the expansive and broadly accepted term 'civic involvement'.<sup>34</sup> The Committee of Inquiry on the Future of Civic Involvement (*Enquete-Kommission; Section 1.2.2*) distinguishes between the following expressions of civic involvement (*Enquete-Kommission, 2002, 65*):

- Political involvement
- Social involvement
- Involvement in associations, unions and churches
- Involvement in public positions and offices
- Forms of mutuality
- Self-help
- Corporate citizenship

The advantage of adopting an expansive term (e.g. civic involvement) is that such terms are able to encompass traditional and new concepts, in addition to highlighting similarities.

In England, the government and organisations in the voluntary and community sector developed a national Compact in 1998, with the goal of improving relationships between these entities and realising mutual advantages. The principles outlined in the Compact have been elaborated into a national 'code of good practice' (Home Office, 2001), as well as into a number of similar codes at the local and regional levels. In the national Code of Good Practice (Home Office, 2001, 4), volunteering is defined as 'an important expression of citizenship and essential to democracy. It is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, and can take many forms. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain'. During the preparation of a strategy for volunteering infrastructure, it became apparent that this definition was too narrow to cover the wide range of activities encompassed by voluntarism (Textbox 8).

Textbox 8: The process of defining volunteering in England (Penberthy and Forster, 2004, 40)

*That definition should: include activity by groups as well as individuals; reflect the diversity of volunteering and people's motivations to volunteer; stress that volunteering is a 'normal' activity for people; make it clear that volunteering is not owned by any agency, but rather by volunteers themselves.*

*There has been consensus that volunteering is not about doing favours for family or friends, nor is it about enforced participation, compulsion of financial reward – and describing any of these elements as volunteering is wrong. It has also been made clear that volunteering should not remove statutory obligations of local or national government and neither does it replace employment or the work of employees.*

*The revised and agreed definition of volunteering needs to be backed up with two additional statements; one on the importance of volunteering, and one placing volunteering within the culture and ethos of society in England.*

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<sup>34</sup> *Bürgerschaftliches Engagement*

In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport<sup>35</sup> commissioned an explorative study aimed at informing a new definition of volunteering (Claassen, 2006). It had been determined that a more inclusive term was needed, as the definition that was then in use excluded many new and desired expressions of volunteer effort. The definition proposed by Beveridge (1948) – ‘a private action for a public purpose’ – was not considered an improvement, partly because of the lack of a clear definition of ‘private’ and ‘public’. The term ‘volunteer effort’ (*vrijwillige inzet*)<sup>36</sup> was proposed and has since been in wide use in the Netherlands, including in the documents of the Ministry.

It became clear, however, that the problem lay less in the actual term and more in its interpretation. Based on research of Klein Hegeman and Kuperus (2005) the Dutch national volunteer centre (CIVIQ, a forerunner of the current MOVISIE) developed the ‘Volunteer Effort Wheel’, as a tool for developing customised definitions for volunteer effort. The wheel contains seven key components of volunteering (Textbox 9). Several options are presented within each component. The wheel provides insight into various aspects of volunteering, helps to describe the characteristics of certain types of volunteering and facilitates the formulation of a vision on volunteering that goes beyond the traditional definition.

Textbox 9: Components of the ‘Volunteer Effort Wheel’ (Movisie, 2010)

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motive</li> <li>• Source of volunteer effort</li> <li>• Degree of choice</li> <li>• Degree of remuneration</li> <li>• Beneficiary</li> <li>• Type of organisation</li> <li>• Degree of organisation</li> </ul> |
|---|

As mentioned in Section 1.1.2, most definitions contain the following elements (Govaart and colleagues, 2001):

- Volunteering is non-obligatory;
- Volunteering is unpaid;
- Volunteering takes place in an organised context;
- Volunteering is carried out at least partly for the benefit of others, society as a whole or a specific organisation.

Dekker (2005, 2) concludes that several definitions of volunteering are in use. The terms that are used in various countries also reflect differences in the types of volunteering that take place in these countries. He distinguishes between three basic meanings of volunteering:

- Active membership (*ideellt arbete* in Sweden): as an extra activity for a membership organisation to which one belongs;

<sup>35</sup> *Ministerie voor Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport*

<sup>36</sup> The term ‘volunteer effort’ has a longer history. It has been in use at least since 1970, when the ‘International Association of Volunteer Effort’ (IAVE, 2009) was established. This association comprises a global network of volunteers, volunteer organisations, national representatives and volunteer centres, with members in over 70 countries and in all world regions



- Active citizenship (the old *Ehrenamt* and new ideas about *Bürgerarbeit* in Germany) as an individual responsibility towards the community or polity;
- Unpaid work (the English 'voluntary work' and Dutch *vrijwilligerswerk*): as doing something job-like for a common interest or motivated by a willingness to sacrifice, to give time.

In the academic literature and in policy documents, the concept of social and other types of participation is increasingly being mentioned alongside – or even in the same breath with volunteering (Dekker, 1994; Deth and Leijenaar, 1994; Enquete-Kommission, 2002; Enquete-Kommission, 2003; Hal and colleagues, 2004; RMO, 2008; Flache and Koekoek, 2009; Olk and colleagues 2010). This accentuates the benefits of participation, as well as the risks of non-participation for individuals, the general welfare, the economy, democracy and the social networks and cohesion within communities. Motives for promoting volunteering and participation can coincide. Chapter 6 provides an extensive elaboration of this issue.

### 3.3 The impact of changing visions on volunteering on organisations

#### 3.3.1 Lack of volunteers

Changes in the nature of and participation in volunteering that have taken place since the 1970s (Section 3.1) have generated a decrease in the number of 'classic volunteers' involved in organisations (Table 10). These decreases have led to a shortage of volunteers within organisations that have a role in the delivery of public services. Many of these organisations are therefore in need for more volunteers. Volunteer centres were established with the goal of encouraging people to volunteer.

The history of volunteer centres illustrates the ways in which the voluntary sector responds to changes in the nature of and participation in volunteering. In the United States, the history of volunteer centres extends back to 1932, when the National Committee on Volunteers (NCV) was formed. The Committee was established in order to foster the relationship between volunteers and the growing profession of social work, particularly in response to the overwhelming demands of the Depression (Ellis, 1989). One of the actions of the NCV was to sponsor the creation of the first volunteer centres, whose primary purpose was to refer potential volunteers to various social agencies within the community. These volunteer centres (the number of which has increased greatly since the 1970s) are often affiliated with councils of local social service agencies (United States), Councils for Voluntary Service (England), Consultation and Advisory Councils<sup>37</sup> (Netherlands) or Welfare associations<sup>38</sup> (Germany).

Volunteer centres use promotional activities and recruiting measures to generate interest in volunteering. The impact of these measures, however, should not be overestimated. A very modest proportion of volunteers ultimately find their volunteering opportunities through volunteer centres. Results of surveys in England suggest that this proportion is as low as two per cent (Davis Smith, 1998a, 18; Low, Butt, Ellis Paine and Davis Smith,

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<sup>37</sup> *Raden voor Overleg en Advies*

<sup>38</sup> *Wohlfartsverbände*

2007). Additional means are necessary in order to respond to the declines and transformations that are currently taking place in volunteering, as mentioned in Section 3.1.

The history of volunteer centres also indicates the directions in which these other means are being sought. The first volunteer centres were accused of referring volunteers only to the organisations from which they received funding (Leat, Smolka and Unell, 1981). In order to respond to these allegations and to fulfil their tasks effectively, volunteer centres are currently attempting to achieve a position that will allow them to operate independently of their funders (Osborne, 1999b). Independent volunteer centres can include other volunteering agencies in their services, offer a wider range of opportunities to citizens who are interested in volunteering and qualify for governmental financial support. Independence allows volunteer centres to weigh the interests of volunteers against those of organisations. As mentioned in Section 3.1.4, the interests of third parties, played only a minor role in the early stages of volunteer centres.

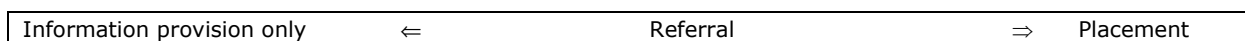
### **3.3.2 Who are the clients of the volunteer centre?**

The process of acquiring independence has led volunteer centres to question, 'Who is our client – the prospective volunteer or the placement agency?' To answer this question, Graff (1997, 32) designed the 'Recruitment and Referral Continuum'. At one end of this continuum, the recruitment and referral service focuses solely on the prospective volunteer and on the provision of information (Figure 2). In this model, volunteer centres simply provide information to prospective volunteers about available placements in the community. This is where the service ends. Volunteers determine for themselves what they will do with the information they have acquired. At the other end of the same continuum, volunteer centres provide much more than information; their primary client is the placement agency, and they facilitate placement:

- The volunteer centre engages in some measure of selection assistance;
- The volunteer centre calls ahead to the placement agency to pave the way for the volunteer;
- The volunteer centre engages in follow-up procedures;
- The volunteer centre confirms the referral and monitors the success of the placement.

In the middle of the continuum is referral. Volunteer centres provide information and take extra measures to ensure that the volunteer actually makes contact with the organisation, while remaining outside of any relationship that may develop between the volunteer and the agency.

Figure 2: Recruitment and referral continuum



Volunteer centres consider both the prospective volunteer and the placement agency as their clients, although they sometimes find their interests are not compatible. The approach that is needed in order to promote the idea of volunteering differs from the approach that is needed in order to recruit volunteers to serve in voluntary organisations. The coordinator of a volunteer-centre in the UK illustrates this dilemma:

I have to keep asking myself, who is our client? If it's the voluntary organisations that we serve, then that cuts down a lot who we can recruit. They want 'safe' volunteers who always turn up and be reliable – that is, the traditional middle-class female volunteer. If it is the volunteers themselves, though, the agenda is different. They want personal development and that can mean making mistakes and doing more than just making the office coffee – so that rules out a lot of local organisations. Which way should I turn? (Osborne, 1999b, 73)

In reality, most volunteer centres serve both clients at the same time, and they try to balance the needs of the two clients in the process of providing their services. One of the characteristics of volunteer centres is a high level of face-to-face contact with prospective volunteers. Because of this, they obviously tend to try to respond to the needs of those volunteers (Graff, 1997, 34). The transformation of volunteering (Section 3.1.2) is manifest in the work of volunteer centres. The experiences of volunteer centres provide less evidence that the willingness to volunteer is decreasing than they do to show that people are seeking volunteering opportunities that fit their personal interests and conditions. At the same time, political and economic changes are influencing the availability of the 'safe, traditional, middle-class female volunteer'. Emancipation has increased the participation of women on the labour market, and it has changed their availability and motivation for volunteering. In addition, unemployment and pre-retirement have produced a new type of volunteers with special needs and capacities. In this case, third parties (Section 3.1.4) have begun to manifest their interest in volunteering. All of these developments have led volunteer centres to conclude that there is less a shortage of volunteers than there is a shortage of contemporary and appropriate opportunities for volunteering within voluntary and community organisations. Under these circumstances, volunteer centres consider the most appropriate way to combat the shortage of volunteers is to combine recruitment with efforts to develop and promote best practices in volunteer policy. Volunteer centres have therefore started to develop from recruiting agencies into development agencies. 'Perhaps one of the most significant developments at the local level has been a move to refocus efforts from a concentration on the brokerage of volunteering opportunities which has been the volunteer centre's core role, to a broader range of functions' (Rochester and colleagues, 2010, 224).

The German cooperation of volunteer centres<sup>39</sup> chose 'Brokerage or development agency?'<sup>40</sup> as the central theme for their 12<sup>th</sup> National Conference, which took place in Ingolstadt, Bavaria in October 2007. This formulation is actually not so much a question as it is an expression of the conviction that the task of recruiting volunteers and promoting volunteering is currently a highly complex task. Volunteer centres in a number of countries (Graff, 1997; Osborne, 1999b; Meijs and Stubbe, 2001; Ebert and colleagues 2002) share this conviction. According to Penberthy and Forster (2004, 4) the task of volunteer centres is '... to encourage people to volunteer, to make the process of engaging in voluntarism as easy as possible and to ensure that the quality of the volunteering experience is as good as it can be'. From this perspective, the role of volunteer centres no longer is limited to brokerage, but expands to helping volunteer-involving organisations to develop volunteering policies that answer the demands of contemporary volunteers and that respond to current political and social developments.

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<sup>39</sup> *Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freiwilligenagenturen*, or bagfa

<sup>40</sup> *Vermittlung oder Entwicklung Agentur?*

In the United States, the ability of volunteer centres to expand their range of functions is not a given. Ellis (2002) comments that the United Way's influence has restricted the process of expanding the role of American volunteer centres. The United Way has a long tradition of supporting the clearinghouse function of volunteer centres. In 1986, 115 volunteer centres were internal divisions of United Way, and 90 per cent of the other 265 volunteer centres were receiving a portion of their funding from the United Way (Ellis, 1989, 2).

While most volunteer centres within United Ways are allowed to capture information on volunteering in all sorts of settings, their focus ultimately narrows over time to the types of organisations given funding by the United Way. So, for example, government agencies – a huge category of volunteer-involving settings – are under-served, as are cultural arts programs, environmentalism, and other political action causes, despite their obvious importance to community involvement. [...] Internal United Way volunteer centers are restricted from outside fundraising which would be direct competition to the United Way campaign.

By way of example, Ellis mentions that, in the mid-1980s, the local United Way denied funding to the Philadelphia volunteer centre, one of the oldest independent centres in the country. Instead, the United Way chose to merge the facility into the new 'full-service' United Way, thus owning rather than funding the volunteer centre. Although the Philadelphia volunteer centre had too few resources in the new situation, they were able to provide some useful services. By 2002, however, it had ceased to exist (Ellis, 2002).

### **3.3.3 Competition between organisations**

Due to the shortage of volunteers, organisations experience competition from each other. This makes their task of recruiting and retaining volunteers particularly complex. A study by Brudney and Meijs (2007, 2009) provides insight into this complexity. In this study, Brudney and Meijs elaborate Hardin's (1968) concept of the 'tragedy of the commons' in the context of the volunteering sector.

The tragedy of the commons refers to a situation in which the rational pursuit of self-interest by each individual actor results in the despoliation of a common or shared resource to the detriment of all. Communal grazing land, fisheries, timberlands and natural energy sources are examples of common resources. The tragedy arises when individuals are rewarded economically for exploiting a common pool resource, while other potential users – the community – bear all the costs: less of the shared resource remains available to them (Kuperus, Meijs, Brudney and Tschirhart, 2007, 5.)

Brudney and Meijs (2007, 2009) examine whether volunteer energy can suffer a similar fate. Among the consumers of volunteer energy, they mention nonprofit and government agencies, religious institutions, volunteer centres, associations, social and sports clubs and civic groups, as well as private business firms engaged in employee volunteering and community service programmes. As a consumer of volunteer effort, an organisation lays a claim to the volunteer resource and is actually in competition with other organisations to obtain and consume volunteer energy for own purposes. Just as with the share of grazing lands, fisheries or energy resources, provisions are needed to ensure that the

users employ the volunteer energy prudently and to sustain the resource for the future. In the absence of such provisions, there is a danger that the gross amount of the resource could stagnate, become exhausted and eventually decline, particularly if demand for the resource should increase. This 'inconvenient truth'<sup>41</sup> burdens the organisation and creates a need to adopt appropriate measures to guarantee the future availability of volunteers. One of these measures involves the appointment of special volunteer administrators or volunteer managers, who have special qualifications and conditions available.

**3.3.4 Volunteer management**

An examination of why volunteers tend to stop volunteering in organisations revealed that two out of five volunteers who had quit had done so because of one or more poor volunteer management practices (McCurley, 2005). In another study, Hager (2004, 5) finds:

Three out of five charities and only one out of three congregations with social services outreach activities reported having a paid staff person who worked on volunteer coordination. However, among these paid volunteer coordinators one in three have not received any training in volunteer management, and half spend less than 30 percent of their time on volunteer coordination.

In England, the Institute for Volunteering Research identifies volunteer management as one of a number of key areas for action needed to strengthen the internal infrastructure of volunteer-involving organisations (Penberthy and Forster, 2004, 41).

Volunteer administrators in various countries have established associations or formed networks to exchange information and experiences with colleagues. For example, 13 of the more than 40 networks of volunteer administrators in the state of Minnesota merged in 2002 to form MAVA, the Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration (DeGolier, 2002). The association’s mission is to promote the development, visibility and credibility of the profession of volunteer administration. McCurley and Ellis (2006) consider a number of issues concerning the 'profession' of volunteer management and the design of a possible association that would serve the needs of managers of volunteer programmes. They suggest the formation of a professional association that offers a combination of services (Textbox 10).

Textbox 10: Services to be offered by a professional association or by volunteer administrators (McCurley and Ellis, 2006)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information resources</li> <li>• Networking</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Professional standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Advocacy</li> <li>• Ethos creation</li> <li>• Participation</li> </ul>
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In the Netherlands, volunteer administrators have been promoting their professional interests in a national vocational association (AGORA, 2009)<sup>42</sup> since 1989. In 2007, this association had 400 members. AGORA cooperates with a vocational union in the area of

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<sup>41</sup> A reference to Al Gore’s book and video *An Inconvenient Truth*, which were created to draw attention to the need to take action to protect the climate.  
<sup>42</sup> National vocational association for volunteer work

welfare and care, and it works within this cooperation to advocate for the employment conditions and collective labour agreements of volunteer administrators. The Dutch collective labour agreement for social and welfare work has acknowledged the profession of volunteer administration since 2003 (CAO-Welzijn, 2003, 175). In cooperation with the University of Applied Sciences Utrecht,<sup>43</sup> AGORA offers a post-academic course in 'Innovative Volunteer Management'.

Although German volunteer administrators have yet to form their own network or association, the Academy for Volunteerism (Akademie für Ehrenamtlichkeit, 2009) has been educating volunteer administrators in volunteering management since 1998. Volunteer management is receiving attention in England as well. In the strategic plan entitled *Building on Success: Strategy for Volunteering Infrastructure in England 2004-2014* (Penberthy and Forster, 2004), Volunteering England calls for comprehensive investment in volunteer management:

There should be widely recognised accredited qualifications for volunteer managers. Volunteer managers should be appropriately recognised within their organisations and decision making processes. There should be a stronger sense of career development and progression for staff within the world of volunteering (Penberthy and Forster, 2004, 41).

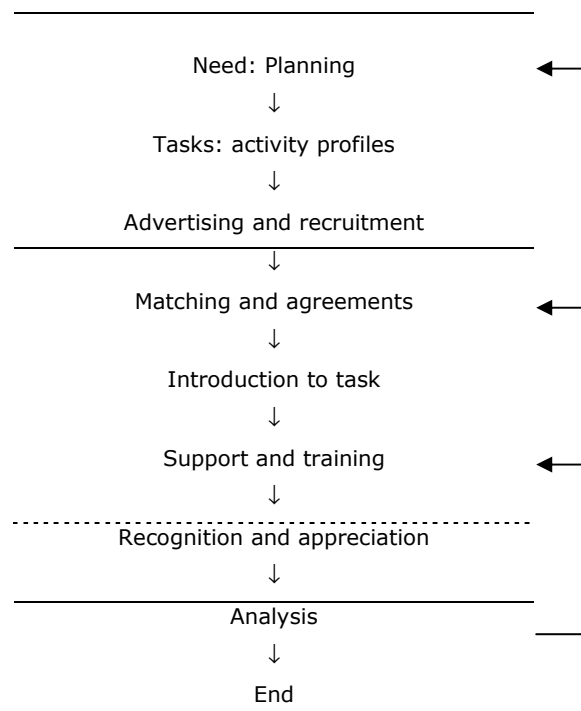
One characteristic feature of an association of volunteer administrators is the aim to strengthen and advance their profession (DeGollier, 2002). Various authors (e.g. DeGollier, 2002; McCurley and Ellis, 2006) advise volunteer administrators to use the resources offered by associations for volunteer administrators, as well as by volunteer centres (which are complementary, but different).

Although volunteers play an important role in NPOs, the ways in which volunteers function in organisational settings has only recently begun to attract academic attention (Meijs, 1997; Karr, 2001; Liao-Troth, 2008; Boezeman, 2009; Rochester and colleagues, 2010, 147; Howlett, 2010, 355). Hilger (2006a) places the basic elements of the volunteer management process in an eight-step schema (Figure 3).

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<sup>43</sup> Hogeschool Utrecht

Figure 3: Basic elements of the volunteer management process (Hilger, 2006a, 17)



Source: Author's own figure, partly based on Biedermann (2002)

In most countries, the development of volunteer management has followed its own course. The concepts of 'volunteer manager', 'manager of motivation' and 'management of volunteer organisations' are in general use within the field of volunteering. In the eight countries I investigated, research institutes, and national and local volunteer centres play a role in the development and implementation of volunteer management. In England, the 'Investing in Volunteers' programme (Investing in Volunteers, 2010) was developed to promote the importance of volunteer management. Penberthy and Forster (2004, 41), identify a number of key areas (Textbox 11) to strengthen volunteer management.

Textbox 11: Key areas for volunteer management (Penberthy and Forster, 2004, 41).

*It has been suggested that volunteer management is the most frequently overlooked building block in a volunteer involving organisation's internal infrastructure.*

*Volunteer-involving organisations need to make it easier for people to volunteer. Volunteer-involving organisations need to develop a greater range of quality opportunities for volunteers – not just the tasks that nobody wants to do – and that these opportunities need to reflect volunteers' availability both in terms of time commitments and when they want to volunteer.*

*It is recommended that volunteers should be able to be involved in their organisation's decision-making processes, and that volunteer-involving organisations should be looking at models of campaigning / activism / bottom-up community development as part of the spectrum of volunteering available.*

*There should be widely recognised accredited qualifications for Volunteer Managers. Volunteer Managers should be appropriately recognised within their organisations and decision making processes. There should be a stronger sense of career development and progression for staff within the world of volunteering.*

*Volunteer-involving organisations should also have access to an accredited quality standard for the management of volunteers*

Even in Germany, where initiatives to promote and support volunteering did not appear until the late 1990s, the concepts of volunteer management, management of volunteer work and management of volunteers have come into widespread use (Rozenkranz and Weber, 2002; Akademie für Ehrenamtlichkeit, 2009; Wallraff, 2010). In contrast to the

Netherlands and England, however, these concepts have yet to be defined uniformly in systematic programmes or modules. Each of the 16 German Federal States promotes volunteering on its own way, and the development and implementation of volunteer management takes place not generally, but within the specific sectors of volunteering (e.g. sports, welfare and the environmental movement).<sup>44</sup>

Although the measures mentioned above (e.g. recruitment support provided by volunteer centres, the appointment of volunteer administrators and the development of volunteer management) are particularly helpful sources of support for organisations in the development of volunteer policies, they are less responsive to the interests of third parties. These parties stretch the limits of current definitions of volunteering, in many countries going beyond the direct interests and possibilities of organisations. Third parties arouse the debate on volunteerism, broadening it to include the meaning of volunteer involvement for civic engagement, community service, service learning, corporate social responsibility, social inclusiveness and social cohesion.

Local volunteering infrastructure is developed against this background, which includes many and divergent motives for the promotion and support of volunteering. Chapter 4 explores the concept of volunteering infrastructure and focuses on the specific circumstances, motives and initiators that led to the establishment of volunteering infrastructure in eight countries since the 1970s.

### 3.4 Conclusion

This chapter shows that the volunteering field is in transition in many respects and regions. Definitions are changing. Volunteering is being affected by global patterns and societal processes. Individual and collective engagement is being expressed in new forms and by new parties, who are assigning new meanings and emotions to volunteering. A 'new volunteerism' is being distinguished from 'classic volunteerism'. The decreasing numbers of 'classic volunteers' is urging volunteer-involving organisations to respond with volunteer policies that are capable of responding to the changing motives and conditions under which 'new volunteers' make themselves available. Volunteer managers and volunteer management have emerged. These developments form a background that highlights the need for an infrastructure that can meet the challenges, interests and obstacles within the dynamic field of volunteering. The establishment of volunteering infrastructure is a fact.

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<sup>44</sup> Interview with Dr. Adrian Reinert (08/01/07), chair of the *Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Freiwilligenagenturen (Bagfa)* the German national association for volunteer centres



## 4 VOLUNTEERING INFRASTRUCTURE

This chapter elaborates on the concept of volunteering infrastructure. Section 4.1 begins by describing the distinction between volunteer policies and volunteering policies and subsequently introduces volunteering infrastructure as an instrument for implementing volunteering policies. A number of different agencies provide the infrastructure within the voluntary and community sector.<sup>45</sup> I make a distinction between organisations that provide volunteering infrastructure from those that provide infrastructure for the voluntary & community sector in general. Although volunteering infrastructure is present on various geographical levels, this study focuses on the local level, as this is where most volunteers are active. Section 4.2 focuses on the specific circumstances, motives and initiators that led to the establishment of volunteering infrastructure since the 1970s in each of the eight countries that are serving as case for this research. Section 4.3 describes the initial expectations underlying the first organisations to provide local volunteering infrastructure in eight cases. Section 4.4 identifies the core tasks and services that have come to characterise the operations of these organisations. Summarising this inventory, Section 4.5 provides a general definition of organisations that provide local volunteering infrastructure and sketches a template for a local volunteering infrastructure. Section 4.6 focuses on special programmes implemented by the branch organisations of national volunteer centres (the collective noun for organisations that provide volunteering infrastructure) in order to incorporate common brands, goals and operational standards for volunteering infrastructure. Section 4.7 explores the future prospects for the local volunteering infrastructure by describing the current views on volunteering and volunteering infrastructure in the cases addressed in this study, as well as at the European and international level.

The topics of these sections are illustrated and supported with information about the development of volunteering infrastructure that has been collected for the eight cases that are addressed in this research. Often, these data are not comparable. Although extensive and profound scientific studies are available on the volunteering infrastructure in some of the cases (England, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway), few of these studies address the same questions. In other cases (Denmark, Finland, Italy, United States), even such isolated studies were scarce and global. Only documents written in Dutch, English or German or were consulted for the purposes of this study.

The cases varied considerably in terms of the phase of development of local volunteering infrastructure. Although it was possible to fill some of these gaps in the information through personal contacts with researchers and practitioners working within the volunteering infrastructure, it is important to note that this study does not in any way claim to

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<sup>45</sup> According to the London Voluntary Service Council (2009): 'The Voluntary & Community Sector consists of registered charities, as well as non-charitable, nonprofit organisations, associations and self-help groups and community groups. They must involve some aspect of voluntary activity, though many are also professional organisations with paid staff, some of which are of considerable size. Community organisations tend to be focussed on particular localities or groups within the community; many are dependent entirely or almost entirely on voluntary activity'.

reflect exhaustive or definitive on knowledge of the volunteering infrastructure in the eight cases under investigation.

## 4.1 Defining volunteering infrastructure

### 4.1.1 *The distinction between volunteer policy and volunteering policy*

Volunteer policies are organisational policies for volunteers that are analogous to HRM policies for paid staff (Hal and colleagues, 2004, 22). They are intended to attract, satisfy and retain volunteers by offering inspiring volunteering opportunities and appropriate preconditions. Volunteering policies are much broader; they are deliberate strategies adopted by governments (or other bodies) in order to influence and stimulate volunteering and volunteerism in general (Hal and colleagues 2004, 22). While volunteer policies focus solely on specific organisations, volunteering policies emphasise the development of civil society (Howlett and Locke, 1999, 67). In many countries, the International Year of Volunteers (IYV2001), with its four goals of promotion, recognition, facilitation and networking (Textbox 12), can be considered the driving force for the development of volunteering policies (Hal and colleagues, 2004, 22).

Textbox 12: IYV2001 goals for volunteering policy (Hal and colleagues, 2004, 26)

- **Recognition**, which can be directed towards acknowledging contributions of volunteering in terms of the services it provides or towards acknowledging the importance of volunteering for society in general;
- **Promotion**, which can demonstrate the flexibility of volunteering with regard to individual interests and preferences, conditions, and goals or role models and heroes. Further promotional activities can show that volunteering is not only a moral obligation, but it is also fun, personally rewarding and facilitates new social (and professional) contacts;
- **Facilitation/support** which can be directed towards developing an infrastructure of supporting bodies (e.g. national [umbrella] organisations or local volunteer centres). It can also focus on creating a favourable (legal) environment for volunteering or removing legal barriers for volunteers and volunteer organisations;
- **Networking** which essentially involves drawing connections between the volunteer community and the broader society. In many countries networking efforts are aimed at attracting new groups (e.g. youth, elderly, the corporate community, migrants, students)

### 4.1.2 *Instruments for implementing volunteering policies*

As abstract goals for volunteering policy, Brudney (2004) suggests that governments should adopt the 'Four C's' in order to create a:

- Climate to encourage volunteering;
- Context to protect volunteers;
- Culture of knowledge about volunteering;
- Conditions to support volunteer involvement financially.

According to Davis Smith (2003), government support is vital if volunteering is to fulfil its true potential. Reflecting on the results of IYV2001, Davis Smith (2003, 25) identifies six ways in which governments can make these abstract goals more concrete (Textbox 13). One of the key areas of government support mentioned involves facilitating the development of volunteer centres at the national and local levels.

Textbox 13: Lessons for governments that aspire to promote volunteering (Davis Smith, 2003, 25)

- *Provide funds to build national and local infrastructure to support volunteering;*
- *Create policy and a legislative climate within which volunteering can flourish;*
- *Set good examples by opening the public sector for volunteers and by stimulating public debate on the importance of volunteering for society;*
- *Forge partnerships with the voluntary and commercial sectors;*
- *Help to generate publicity for volunteering;*
- *Recognise the contribution volunteers make to national life and recruit VIP-ambassadors.*

Because most people volunteer within their own communities, the emphasis of volunteering policies is at the local level. In order to implement volunteering policies, Brudney (2004) advises local governments to provide the following services to organisations that involve volunteers:

- In-kind support
- Technical assistance
- Assistance in matching volunteers
- Incentives for volunteer work.

Results from a survey conducted in the Netherlands (Pennen, 2003a, 34) suggest that municipalities are already bringing these suggestions into practice (Textbox 14). Further information on volunteering policies in the European Union (and its Member States) is presented by Hal and colleagues (2004), Spes (2006, 2009a, 2009b) and Held (2010).

Textbox 14: Measures taken by Dutch municipalities to promote and support volunteering (Pennen, 2003b, 34)

- *Recognising the activities of volunteers and their organisations with prizes, city-pins and parties;*
- *Matching the supply of and demand for volunteers by establishing volunteer centres;*
- *Encouraging special groups to volunteer (minorities, young people);*
- *Ensuring the satisfaction and retention of volunteers;*
- *Creating appropriate preconditions (facilities, insurance, financial support);*
- *Providing training, expertise and consultation;*
- *Improving cooperation and networks amongst NPOs;*
- *Linking NPOs with business networks;*
- *Promoting volunteering according to its diversity and versatility.*

#### **4.1.3 Distinguishing Volunteering Infrastructure from Voluntary & Community Sector Infrastructure**

On behalf of the British Home Office Active Community Unit, Compass Partnership and the Office of Public Management (Compass Partnership, 2004, 7) conducted a wide-ranging consultation exercise involving infrastructure with the voluntary and community sector in 2004. This consultation fed into the Capacity-Building and Infrastructure Framework that the Home Office (2004, 15) published in the same year as *ChangeUp*, which was developed to prepare a capacity-building and infrastructure framework for the voluntary sector. Using these two documents, Penberthy and Forster (2004, 15) define infrastructure, infrastructure organisations and their specific tasks (Textbox 15).

Textbox 15: Definition of infrastructure, infrastructure organisations and their tasks (Penberthy and Forster, 2004, 15)

Citing studies by Compass Partnership and the Office of Public Management, Penberthy and Forster (2004) provide the following definitions and explanations:

- *Infrastructure: 'the physical facilities, structures, systems, relationships, people, knowledge, and skills that exist to support and develop, coordinate, represent, and promote front-line organisations thus enabling them to deliver their missions more effectively.'*
- *Infrastructure organisations: 'voluntary organisations whose primary purpose is the provision of infrastructure functions (support and development, coordination, representation and promotion) to front-line voluntary and community organisations'.*
- *'Voluntary sector infrastructure has a uniquely important role to play in supporting voluntary and community organisations and the communities they serve. It strengthens and supports the capacity building efforts of individual voluntary and community organisations, provides a voice that can influence other stakeholders to create a more conducive environment for voluntary and community sector activity and helps to build the knowledge, skills and resources required for both these things to happen'.*
- *'Infrastructure is a highly efficient way to enhance the performance of the voluntary and community sector because knowledge, skills and experience can be gathered from many organisations both inside and outside the Voluntary & Community Sector and disseminated as a public benefit – often free of charge or at low cost. At its best, infrastructure provides economies of scale that cannot be achieved by individual organisations acting alone'.*

Infrastructure can be provided on different geographical levels, to different parties and with different goals. In a study of the role of local intermediary bodies in the voluntary and community sector (also known as 'local development agencies'), Burrige (1990) distinguishes between three types of bodies:

- **Generalist bodies**, which provide a range of services to a range of voluntary organisations (e.g. councils for voluntary service and rural community councils);
- **Specialist bodies**, which provide a range of services to a specific type of voluntary organisation (e.g. play associations);
- **Functional bodies**, which provide a specific service to a range of voluntary organisations (e.g. volunteer centres).

Penberthy and Forster (2004, 15) describe the distinction between organisations that provide volunteering infrastructure and those that provide voluntary and community sector infrastructure along another dimension:

The focus of voluntary and community sector infrastructure is, by its very nature, organisationally focused. The volunteering infrastructure however deviates in this respect. Especially at the local level the primary audience of the volunteering infrastructure is the individual (whether they can be an existing or a potential volunteer), and organisational development is supported to improve the quality and quantity of volunteering opportunities.

Following Burrige (1990) and Penberthy and Forster (2004, 15), I define volunteer centres as *functional bodies that provide volunteering infrastructure*.

## 4.2 The establishment of volunteering infrastructure in eight cases

Until the 1970s, the recruitment of volunteers was essentially a core activity of each NPO, and it was included as part of their volunteer policies. The efforts of volunteers con-

stitute an important means by which organisations can realise their aims. Volunteers donate labour at lower cost, offer legitimacy within the community and deliver unique services that public administrators or professionals cannot provide. Since the 1970s, governments and NPOs in many countries have considered the development of volunteering policies (particularly with regard to recruitment) a necessity. The establishment of volunteer centres is a vital component of this process. To understand the motives that underlie these volunteering policies, this section describes the parties that have been involved with initiating volunteer centres in each of the eight cases, along with their expectations. The focus of this study is on local volunteering infrastructure, given that volunteering takes place primarily at this level, in the heart of communities.

*The case of Denmark.* In Denmark, large-scale social reforms enacted in 1933 assigned a central role to the public sector that involved safeguarding the welfare of all citizens. This 'did not imply a goodbye to voluntary social organisations or private charity as it was called. [...] The plans were to make private charity contribute the services that were difficult to provide through public measures. [...] The system of public social welfare services gradually expands' and gained precedence 'over the more individual and value-oriented lay activities that prevailed in the voluntary organisations and institutions.' If these NPOs were willing to comply with extensive government regulations, they gained the opportunity to provide public services. The expansion of the service tasks of the welfare state increased the role of NPOs in the delivery of services (Ministry of Social Affairs Denmark, 2001, 7).

In the mid-1970s, the welfare state encountered severe problems, including economic recession, unemployment and rising public expenditures due to a growing demand for health care and social services. By this time, 'Denmark was undergoing a rapid transition from an agricultural and industrial society to an information and service society, accompanied by differentiation in the population's needs and requirements'. At the same time, newly established women's and other grassroots movements began to discuss the common welfare-state structures and their conventional solutions. These groups sought alternative solutions to societal problems. They proposed that the decentralisation of public policies and a local community approach would offer favourable conditions for the establishment of associations, as well as for and patient and self-help organisations. These developments culminated in a reorientation of Danish social policy, in which the public sector no longer held exclusive responsibility for social welfare (Ministry of Social Affairs Denmark, 2001, 8).

The welfare state has since transformed into a welfare society, and citizens and companies are encouraged to share in the social responsibility. This 'bottom-up' perspective placed NPOs in a new light (Ministry of Social Affairs Denmark, 2001, 8). In 1989, the Danish Ministry of Social Affairs initiated three volunteer centres as a part of a volunteering development programme, with the goal of providing more citizens with the opportunity to volunteer, while building capacity for local volunteering. The idea of volunteer work as an alternative to ordinary labour market jobs proved more difficult to implement than expected. Greater success was achieved with volunteer projects aimed at preventing isolation and loneliness by strengthening social networks, neighbourhood contacts and self-help initiatives (Henriksen, 2008, 1). In 2004, the Danish Ministry of Social Affairs provided funding for seven new volunteer centres (known as 'model projects'), with the assignment to strengthen cooperation between local governments and NPOs, to in-

crease the visibility of volunteering opportunities and to enhance the capacity of local NPOs to resolve problems (Henriksen, 2008, 2).

*The case of England.* As in the United States, the First and Second World Wars and the intervening Great Depression intensified the need for effective volunteer coordination in England. The contributions of the Red Cross, women's groups and Citizens' Advice Bureaux provide examples of strong partnership between state and voluntary effort. Social legislation enacted in the 1940s laid the foundation for the welfare state and led to the redefinition of the role and responsibilities of the state. The expansion of the boundaries of the state made its limitations more apparent. During the 1960s and 1970s, NPOs maintained their position at the forefront of social change. The 1969 report of the Aves Committee (Brewis and Finnegan, 2012, 3) on the role of volunteers in social services called for improvements in the management and training of volunteers. The national Volunteer Centre was established partly in response to this call (Howlett, 2008; Rochester and colleagues 2010, 223). The desire to combat new problems (e.g. urban decay and racial tension) and enhanced public expectations stimulated the formation of community-based groups and organisations for consumers and the users of services (Kendall and Knapp, 1993). In 1973, Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) established 28 local volunteer centres 'to promote, support, and develop voluntary participation in a local district and not necessary delivering voluntary service' (Volunteering England, 1998). In 1978, the Wolfenden Committee called for the 'strengthening of national- and local-level 'intermediary' bodies and development agencies which would support and foster voluntary and community action, while also providing an interface between the voluntary sector and government' (Rochester and colleagues, 2010, 223).

*The case of Finland.* In general, Finnish policies on civic engagement stress employment, services and advocacy (Hilger, 2005b). With reference to the distinction between the service service and expressive functions of volunteering (Salamon and colleagues, 2003, 22; Textbox 1), 'advocacy' is a defining element of the expressive function, and it should not be seen as a synonym. Until the 1990s, Finland was characterised by a relatively homogeneous population and a membership culture that relied heavily on the state. Membership did not necessarily involve participation.

The majority (of the population) rather pays money to associations it trusts to carry out advocacy work and lobbying. Activism in a more narrow sense is limited to smaller circles. [...] With the inclusion of volunteering culture and recreation make up for the largest share. Since service provision follows the characteristics of the Nordic model of state provided services, social services and health are not the biggest field for NPOs (Hilger, 2005b, 9).

The state-based social security system had assumed functions that had previously been the domain of NPOs. 'The voluntary sector was left with filling gaps in the public services'. Appreciation for volunteering has decreased drastically in the care and social sectors, where it is sometimes considered a threat to the recent professionalisation (Hilger, 2006a, 8).

NPOs have shifted their orientation towards policy advocacy (Helander, Laaksonen, Sundback, Anheier and Salamon, 1999). In the 1990s, a number of factors contributed to an increase in the number of NPOs in Finland. In 1993, municipalities gained increasing responsibility for social and health services, although budgetary constraints limited their

ability to provide them. The Finnish people nonetheless continued their strong belief in the welfare state. Nevertheless, NPOs and volunteering are currently developing into a significant factor. The sharp economic crisis of the early 1990s generated further interest in the third sector, particularly with regard to the future of work and social relief. Attention was given to the possible creation of employment through associations (Hilger, 2006a, 9). Rifkin's (1995) ideas to allocate due unemployment unused labour to productive work for the community, sparked a national debate that eventually focused on employment and employability through associations. Rifkin developed these ideas in a period that the ideal of full employment or the abundant exploitation of nature in the name of progress no longer appeared self-evident. In answer to the problem of unemployment and alienation from the labour market, Rifkin proposed allocating labour that remained unused due to unemployment to productive work for the community. In 1998, the Finnish Ministry of Labour introduced a combined labour-market subsidy to help third-sector organisations employ people facing long-term unemployment; in 2004, they enacted a subsidy to support third-sector projects aim at integrating young people into the labour market (Hilger, 2005b).

The democratic dimension of volunteering has recently gained importance as one of the four priorities in the governmental strategy, which focuses on citizen's activity. 'So far it is centred around political activity in a more narrow sense, e.g. voting and membership in political organisations. This is an effort to complement the emphasis of nonprofit organisations in the international aid and development dimension with the domestic and in particular municipal field of politics' (Hilger, 2006a, 10). A positive relationship is emerging between NPOs and the state, allowing room for civic involvement. This development is taking place despite critical debates concerning the nature of this relationship. These debates are fuelled by a fear of using volunteers as a substitute for the statutory provision of welfare services.

In January 1993, the Citizen Forum<sup>46</sup> was initiated in Helsinki by five individuals with the goal of supporting the initiative and participation of citizens and encouraging people to help themselves and each other (e.g. by initiating various types of self-help groups, support groups and other forms of volunteering). The Citizen Forum is a genuine NPO with no political connections, having 'emerged out of a larger concern for social integration.' It is sponsored by RAY (2009)<sup>47</sup>, which uses gaming profits to support activities and projects in the field of health and social welfare<sup>48</sup>. 'The main goal of the Citizen Forum (2009) is to create new opportunities for citizens to use their productive ideas and skills to participate in their communities'. It also helps people to find alternative means of self-employment (Hilger, 2008b, 6). One component of the Citizen Forum is a service and development centre, which offers expertise in the following areas:

- Voluntary activities;
- Developing local centres for volunteers, unemployed and other people;
- Self-help activities;
- Supporting citizen-driven projects.

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<sup>46</sup> *Kansalaisareena*. This forum is comparable to a national volunteer centre.

<sup>47</sup> Slot Machine Foundation

<sup>48</sup> Annitta Raitanen, executive director *Kansalaisareena*, interviewed 22/04/09

The model upon which the Citizen Forum is based resembles that of many European national volunteer centres. The leading idea is that volunteers 'and other active citizens' can rely on assistance and support from an independent organisation that will safeguard their independence and autonomy. The issues are increasing in importance, due to current discussions concerning the boundaries between paid employment and volunteering (Kansalaisareena, 2009). Against this background, and with the support of the Citizen Forum, 24 volunteer centres have been emerged in the greater Helsinki area and another 12 in the rest of Finland since the 1990s. Many of these volunteer centres are operated by local governments, and about ten are operated by the Red Cross (Hilger, 2008b, 5).

*The case of Germany.* The first German volunteer centre was established in Munich (Zimmer and Backhaus-Maul, 2012, 38) in 1979 by the Association for Women's Interests.<sup>49</sup> This association was established in 1894 with the goal of helping women to find paid employment or volunteer work (Janning and Stremlov, 2006). The Social Department of the Munich Council charged the association to establish 'a central information point' (Relief Information Munich or MHI)<sup>50</sup> and open house for voluntary workers in the social-cultural sector in Munich'. The organisation's primary task is 'to recruit and motivate voluntary helpers for community duties and to offer opportunities that correspond to their preferences, talents and concerns. [...] To this end, social agencies must be found to serve as receiving organisations. In addition, stimulating personal and formal conditions should be created for the voluntary helpers'. According to the explanatory information accompanying this order:

because the public sector has assumed more and more duties over time, volunteerism is in danger of stagnation. Many people are willing to assume duties in their communities, in addition to their daily activities. They like to be involved in social and cultural activities, help other people, gain new experiences and establish new contacts. At the same time, numerous agencies are in need of volunteers, and many assignments can be fulfilled only with the help and involvement of citizens' (Dulich and Kempfle, 2000, 6).

Within this context, information facilities that are not affiliated with religion, party policy or the Social Department are considered important (Dulich and Kempfle, 2000). The increasing role of volunteers in the area of social services is sharpening the relationship between volunteers and professionals. The MHI advocates for volunteers with the goal of generating respect for the specific value and efficiency of volunteer effort, and without intending to discriminate against professionals. They support their efforts with reference to empirical research by Durlach<sup>51</sup>, who concludes that 'the results achieved by non-professionals are equal to or significantly better than those achieved by professionals' (Dulich and Kemple, 2000, 10).

The second German volunteer centre (the Meeting Point for Helpfulness)<sup>52</sup> was opened in Berlin in 1988. The centre was initiated by the CDU Health Senator Ulf Fink, who was inspired by developments in the United States, including volunteer centres and the Neighbourhood Movement (Dulich and Kemple, 2000; Kamlage, 2008). In *The New Cul-*

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<sup>49</sup> *Verein für Fraueninteressen*

<sup>50</sup> *Müncher Helfer Information*

<sup>51</sup> J.A. Durlach, America' is the only source of data to which Dulich and Kemple (2000) refer.

<sup>52</sup> *Treffpunkt Hilfsbereitschaft*



*ture of Helping*,<sup>53</sup> Fink (1990) advocates for 'social time': partners in the labour market should acknowledge that life involves more than work and leisure. Social time is at least one of the components that exist in addition to these two areas of life, and it refers to time in which to be available to other people. Fink further argues the urgent necessity of re-evaluating work that does is not performed in the interest of generating income (Fink, 1990, 73).

The third volunteer centre ('At Times')<sup>54</sup> opened in Bremen in 1995. This centre, which was inspired by examples in England and the Netherlands, is consistent with the concept of a comprehensive volunteer centre. 'We didn't want to be, as Ulf Finks once said, merely a type of job centre. We also wanted to be a service agency that adopts and promotes the idea of volunteering more widely and that offers different opportunities. We want to focus on both the organisations and their volunteers' (Janning and StremLOW, 2006).

The development of volunteer centres has accelerated considerably since 1996, when six major welfare associations that dominated the German social sector began to establish these facilities. Before this time, the professional employees of these welfare associations considered volunteers as a threat to their profession (Kamlage, 2008, 8). Increasing market competition among states, stagnating welfare-state expenses and increased deregulation of the social sector led to dramatic changes in the domain of welfare associations. These changes demanded a stronger market and service orientation, and they generated competition with other welfare service providers for the limited state resources. The pressure of competition and the threat of budgetary deficits led the welfare associations to start promoting volunteering and establish volunteer centres (Kamlage, 2008, 9). According to a study conducted by the Institute for Sociological Analyses and Consultancy in Cologne (Braun, Bischoff and Gensicke, 2001, 93), half of the 190 volunteer centres that existed in 2001 had been initiated by and were embedded within welfare associations.

*The case of Italy.* Barbetta (1993, 1) observes that the Italian NPO-sector emerged as: 'the legal consequence of two conflicts that took place in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century'. An emerging political elite was attempting to restrict the power and influence of the institutions of the Catholic Church. At the same time, they were struggling to incorporate the developing socialist movement within the political framework of a capitalist economy (Barbetta, 1993, 1). These conflicts generated a public-private partnership that spanned the domains of private and public institutions. This partnership allowed the Italian government to respond to the collective need for general welfare, while incorporating and regulating private, Catholic and socialist organisations as providers of public services (Barbetta, 1993; Ascoli and Cnaan, 1997; Muehlebach, 2012, 13). In the 1970s, the NPO sector expanded and became more successful in response to the welfare-state crisis. 'The state is unable to curb the up-and-coming problems such as juvenile hardships, the degradation of urban outskirts, the break up of the family unit and the new poor' (Spes, 2006, 259). These circumstances offered an opportunity for the NPO-sector to collaborate with (or even replace) existing public-service agencies. In the 1980s, public institutions began to acknowledge the full importance of the role and contributions of volunteering in public policy.

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<sup>53</sup> *Die neue Kultur des Helfens*

<sup>54</sup> *Zeitweise*

Volunteerism is regulated by several laws in Italy (EVC, 2003), including the 1991 'Framework law on volunteering' (Law no 266/1991). This legislation specifies the conditions for establishing a volunteering infrastructure. With this law, 'the Italian government has recognised the social value and positive functions of volunteerism as an expression of participation, solidarity and pluralism. The aim of this legislation is to promote the volunteer movement, safeguarding its autonomy and favouring an increase in social, civil and individual participation' (Palma and Paganin, 2001, 63; Muehlebach, 2012, 57). It applies only to NPOs that are willing to collaborate with public authorities. To enjoy the benefits specified in this legislation, NPOs 'must be enrolled in the Regional Register of Voluntary Organisations, held by the Department of Social Affairs of the Regional Government in which the organisation is based' (Palma and Paganin, 2002, 64). One article of this legislation enables the establishment of *voluntary service centres* with the function of promoting, supporting and qualifying the activities of NPOs. This law was the first piece of legislation to support democratic civic organisations and their activities in Italy. Because a number of obstacles impeded the implementation of the legislation, the first volunteer centre (in the province of Belluno) did not open until 1997 (Paganin, 2001).

*The case of the Netherlands.* The promotion of volunteering in the Netherlands was launched in 1970 by Marga Klompé, Minister of Culture, Recreation and Social Work. She was inspired by the United Nations *Declaration on Social Development* (adopted in March 1968). This declaration considered it a duty of citizens to contribute to and participate in social and economic development. Klompé expressed the following motivation for an experiment with local volunteer centres:

Due to the increasing professionalism and institutionalisation in areas that had previously been the domain of volunteers, a less positive appreciation of volunteering has sometimes been observed in these areas. This causes a relation of stress or competition between volunteers and professionals that, although understandable, ultimately produces fruitlessness (CRM, 1975b, 1).

Klompé notes a re-emphasis on the positive contributions of individual volunteers, resulting in the decision to invest in the conditions for the development of volunteering through cooperation, coordination and consultation.

A question that goes much farther concerns whether the current expression of volunteering – which can involve a long history and unique recruitment channels within in many organisations – matches sufficiently with the actual wishes and needs. The mere existence of organised contexts seems to scare many people, especially young people (CRM, 1975b, 2).

The Ministry initiated an experiment with a volunteer centre that promoted cooperation and coordination within the field of volunteering and that brought together the supply of and demand for volunteers.

New ideas on a contemporary expression of volunteering could also be developed from this new centre. Such a volunteer centre should not be an organisation placed above the volunteering field from the top down, but the result of consultation and cooperation of all those who are engaged with volunteering, in whatever manifestation (CRM, 1975b, 2).

After a successful experiment with two local volunteer centres in the cities of Tilburg and Arnhem (from 1972 to 1977), the Ministry established an endowment that would provide each municipality that established a volunteer centre with funding to cover half of the operating costs. This programme lasted from 1977 until 1986. The 1986 Welfare Act<sup>55</sup> shifted responsibility for welfare (including volunteering policy) from the national to the local level of government (Bos, 2006, 10). This shift coincided with economisation measures and high unemployment. Support provided by municipal social-service agencies allowed many volunteer centres to survive or even grow, because of their role in referring unemployed people to volunteer jobs. Public policies and temporary legislation<sup>56</sup> stimulated the social participation of unemployed people in 'paid, subsidised or unpaid work'.

*The case of Norway.* Like other Nordic welfare countries, Norway has long been governed by social democratic governments with a strong emphasis on collective and egalitarian values, state responsibilities towards poor and marginal groups and a high degree of state intervention in the area of welfare. Voluntary effort has traditionally been associated with religious, temperance, labour class and philanthropic activities. Between 1920 and 1970, social democrats demonstrated hostility towards philanthropic welfare solutions, thereby bringing about a system of public welfare services. The idea of a welfare state emerged after 1945, and it was accepted by all political parties (Lorentzen, 2005; Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008). Voluntary work has nonetheless held a strong position in Norway for more than 900 years. The idea of volunteer centres in Norway was launched in 1991.

'In 1988, the national government launched the first White Paper on the voluntary sector in Norway' (Lorentzen, 2005, 6). This report included a positive analysis of the welfare functions of organisations in this sector. In an effort to translate the favourable attitude of the government into policy, 'the Minister of Health and Social Affairs arranged a *hearing*, a meeting where representatives of voluntary welfare associations were encouraged to present their assumed innovative contributions to welfare problems' (Lorentzen, 2005, 7). Inspired by the example of the clearinghouses in the United States, the Red Cross introduced the idea of volunteer centres during this hearing. The national government promised to pay the costs of a fulltime volunteer centre manager, premises and operations for a period of three years. In return, the government required the centres to develop new and innovative activities. No support was offered for existing activities. NPOs, municipalities, church-based social welfare agencies and individuals were invited to apply for public grants. This 'bottom-up' approach allowed local initiatives to develop activities according to local culture, norms and practises. Of the 400 applications, 93 initiatives were selected, largely according to geographical criteria, to receive supporting grants for a trial period of three years. After that period, the National Assembly accepted volunteer centres as permanent institutions (Lorentzen, 2005, 8). Their number increased from 93 in 1993 to 265 in 2005. Between 1992 and 2003, the Institute for Social Research in Oslo performed a continuous evaluation of the volunteer centres, using the reports of output and trends that the volunteer centres provided every three months (Lorentzen, 2005).

*The case of the United States.* The advent of volunteer centres in the United States is closely related to the emergence of national priorities calling for the mobilisation of vol-

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<sup>55</sup> *Welzijnswet*

<sup>56</sup> Legislation on Unpaid Work While Retaining Social Benefits (*Wet Onbeloonde Arbeid Uitkeringsgerechtigden WOAU, 1988-1993*)

unteers. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the first American volunteer centre was founded in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1919, at the end of the First World War, with the goal of mobilising those who had recently been released from war services. By the end of 1933, volunteer centres had been established in 28 cities, with the main purpose of referring potential volunteers to the various social agencies in the community (Ellis, 1989). The early volunteer centres 'were involved in coordinating a wide range of community services, including library support, community development, nutrition programs, dental clinics, milk distribution and health care' (Brudney, 2005a, 79). In 1941, the 70 'Community Volunteer Bureaus' had become an official part of the recently formed 'Defence Councils', and they were renamed as 'Civilian Defence Volunteer Bureaus'. These bureaus performed a dual military/social-welfare role involving the provision of support for civilian defence efforts by managing housing and day-care centres for war workers, social activities for soldiers and the work of volunteers in hospitals. Volunteer centres were rewarded for their ability to alleviate inter-organisational conflicts and ineffectiveness in the utilisation of volunteers (Brudney, 2005a, 79).

After the Second World War, when the Office of Civilian Defence was disbanded, the continued support of the volunteer-centre system began to encroach on political territory. The Bureau of the Budget proposed that volunteer centres could 'serve as 'buffers' between federal purposes and community needs'. The idea failed to take root, however, because of conservative congressional opposition to anything resembling welfare or New Deal politics (Brudney, 2005a, 80).

'A concerted effort by the academic social-work community, the Junior League and the Community Chest and Councils (the forerunner of the current United Way of America) succeeded in securing continued support for 80 volunteer centres through the 1950s' (Brudney, 2005a, 80). For example, the Civilian Defence Volunteer Offices in each borough of New York City were transformed into Citizens Service Organisations. The mission of these organisations was to 'represent all phases of community interest in volunteer service and to incorporate this into the city planning process; to improve volunteer participation in established agencies through increased publicity, training and network development of volunteer organisations; to develop and sponsor local community efforts not directly related to established agencies; and to assist with funding campaigns, community education, general promotion for enhanced community welfare' (Brudney, 2005a, 80).

#### **4.2.1 Summary**

In this section, I have listed the motives that provided the impetus for eight cases to establish volunteer centres. In the course of time, these motives may have changed or expanded. Each country had its own reasons, initiators and expectations for establishing volunteer centres. Despite these differences, this overview revealed several general arguments for why volunteering should be promoted. These arguments include the following: the need to reevaluate the contributions made by volunteers in the delivery of services due to the crisis of the welfare state; volunteering as a means of societal participation now that the ideal of full employment appears unreachable; the implications of volunteering (as an expression of active citizenship) to democracy and to the political conduct of society; and the contribution of volunteering to social inclusiveness, mutual trust and strong communities.

The initial intention of the establishment of volunteer centres (as described above) was to help organisations resolve their shortage of volunteers. This objective was gradually extended to include measures intended to stimulate volunteerism in general, to the benefit of the various parties interested in volunteering. As demonstrated in the next chapter, the development from limited volunteer policies to broad volunteering policies occurred almost unnoticed, and it later became firmly established. A comparable observation can be made with regard to the development process of volunteering infrastructure, which is an important means for the support of both volunteers and volunteering policies.

In the interest of completeness, must be noted that volunteering infrastructure has manifested itself on various levels: globally, through the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE, 2009), with members in 70 countries all over the world; at the European level, through the European Volunteer Centre (CEV, 2009), with members in all countries of the European Union; at the national level, through dozens of national volunteer centres (many of which are members of IAVE and/or CEV); and locally, through hundreds of local or regional volunteer centres. In the eight cases that are examined in this study, about 2000 local/regional volunteer centres are active (Table 6). The General Assembly Conference of CEV in Malmö (October 14-16, 2009) illustrates the currency and relevance of volunteering infrastructure in its central theme: 'An enabling volunteering infrastructure in Europe'.

#### **4.3 The expectations of local volunteering infrastructure in eight cases**

This research focuses on local volunteering infrastructure. In this study, the term *volunteer centre* is applied to summarise the various names used in the different cases to define organisations that provide local volunteering infrastructure: *agency for voluntary service, social service agency, volunteer bureau, voluntary action centre, volunteering centre, voluntary support centre, voluntary network centre, volunteer agency, voluntary service centre* (United States and England), *Freiwilligenagentur* (Germany), *Vrijwilligerscentrale* (Netherlands), *Frivillighedsformidlingens* (Denmark), *Servizio per il Volontariato* (Italy), *frivillighetssentral, nærmiljøsentral* (Norway), *vapaaehtoisyhälyys* (Finland).

The promotion and support of volunteering is one feature of volunteer centres, it is not the exclusive domain. Any organisation that involves volunteers is likely to take action to find and retain volunteers. Sports clubs, churches, political parties, unions and all kinds of associations have specialised bodies that provide them with support and services.

One feature that truly distinguishes volunteer centres from organisations that involve volunteers is that volunteer centres promote and support volunteering for any organisation that needs volunteers, at least in theory, and not for their 'own use'. 'The volunteering infrastructure exists to encourage people to volunteer, to make the process of engaging in voluntarism as easy as possible, and to ensure that the quality of the volunteering experience is as good as it can be' (Penberthy, 2004, 4). Volunteer centres encourage volunteerism and civic involvement in a wide range of activities that contribute to a better society. In this respect, the mission of volunteer centres far surpasses the tasks of recruiting, satisfying and retaining volunteers. Susan Ellis (1989, x) defines a volunteer centre as:

- A concept: an expression of a community-wide vision of volunteerism that is inclusive of people and causes;
- A place: where diverse groups can meet in mutual concern for the support of volunteers;
- A focal point: for coordinating and increasing the visibility of the efforts of volunteers.

The following section provides an overview of the initial expectations of the volunteering infrastructure in each of the eight cases investigated in this research.

In Denmark, local volunteer centres have become widespread during the past decade. One of the aims of these agencies is to establish contact between people who want to work as volunteers and organisations that need voluntary labour. Volunteer centres also offer support to small local associations, help volunteers start up new activities and assist the initiators of self-help groups (Ministry of Social Affairs Denmark, 2001, 13).

Osborne (1999b, 67-68) describes volunteer centres in England as:

Volunteer Bureaux are one of a range of Local Development Agencies that are a feature of the voluntary and community sector in the UK. [...] Local Development Agencies are in the position not only to promote voluntary and community action within that sector, but also to act as conduits for the diffusion and adoption of good practice developments. Their activities include supporting such local voluntary and community action as volunteering, campaigning, community action and community development, direct service provision by voluntary organisations (Osborne, 1999b, 67-68).

Most of the 37 Finnish volunteer centres are small. Two-thirds are located in the greater capital area of Helsinki. As Hilger (2008b, 6) describes:

They are integrated into the local context, and they focus on volunteer brokerage. Since many centres have been established as a reaction to demand in care work their structure and activities have developed around this task. An exception to this rule is the Citizen Arena that emerged out of a larger concern for societal integration and only later took the role of a brokerage organisation. Since volunteer centres usually cooperate with professional care services they receive some support from the municipalities. [...] other important sources of project funding are the Slot Machine Association (RAY, 2009) and the Finnish Federation for Social Welfare and Health. The Red Cross as one of the largest host of volunteer centres runs its centres through its local branches which also receive some public funding.

Finland has no general governmental policy on volunteering infrastructure.

As described by Ebert and colleagues (2002, 5), volunteer centres in Germany serve:

[...] as local open houses, which form a building block for the further development of volunteer involvement. They open new access roads and provide impulses for civic involvement in order to stimulate the necessary processes of change. Volunteer centres are successful in forming networks and develop-

ing innovative forms of responsibility. In doing so, they are able to persuade other interested parties to become involved.

According to the Italian researchers Palma and Paganin (2002, 63):

[...] since 1991, in accordance with Law 266/91 (National Framework Law on Voluntarism), the Italian government has recognised the social value and positive functions of volunteerism as an expression of participation, solidarity and pluralism. The aim of this legislation is to promote the development of the volunteer movement, safeguarding its autonomy and favouring an increase in social, civil and individual participation.

Volunteer centres are charged with the mission of supporting and qualifying voluntary activity. To this end, they provide services to both volunteers and voluntary organisations (Spes, 2006, 281).

The Dutch government attributes the following functions to volunteer centres:

[...] bringing together the supply of and demand for volunteers, attending to general and specific publicity, identifying volunteer opportunities and recruiting volunteers, helping agencies and statutory organisations to become 'volunteer minded', initiating volunteering, identifying gaps and impediments and serving as a point of contact for groups, agencies and statutory organisations (CRM, 1980, 73).

After the presentation of a positive governmental analysis of the Norwegian voluntary sector's welfare functions in 1988, voluntary organisations expected some political gain. In the absence of a strategy to support volunteering, the Minister of Health and Social Affairs arranged a hearing in 1990, in which representatives of voluntary welfare associations were encouraged to present innovative contributions to welfare problems. Inspired by the US model of local voluntary *clearinghouses*, the Norwegian Red Cross suggested that the government should stimulate the number of community-based, voluntary activities. This would connect people who wanted to help with either users or associations that were in need of more volunteers (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 4).

The political parties, the government and the volunteer associations welcomed this suggestion. As a result of the hearing, the Norwegian Parliament decided in 1991 to grant 90 million NOK to a three-year pilot programme with volunteer centres. The public funds were not tied to any particular way of organising volunteer centres. Instead, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs made an open announcement of the public funds in media in 1991. The programme was launched as an 'experiment in testing practical models'; no way of operating and organising was presented as 'better' or 'correct', as long as the central tasks benefited civil activities. The idea was that the government could draw on a diversity of pilot volunteer centres to gather experiences regarding the best ways of mobilising volunteers (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 4).

Brudney (2005a, 77) defines volunteer centres in the United States as:

[...] community organizations that help to stimulate and coordinate local voluntary action. First created in the United States in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, these organizations have been given different titles over time, including "vol-

unteer bureaus”, “voluntary action centers” and “volunteer centers.” [...] Volunteer centers may engage in a wide variety of activities, including skill banks and databanks of volunteer opportunities, board placement services, public advocacy for volunteerism, volunteer recruitment, screening and placement, consultation to other agencies on starting volunteer programs, training and technical assistance to volunteer coordinators, and research and dissemination of community data (Brudney, 2005a, 77).

As illustrated by the descriptions provided above, governments in all eight cases expect volunteer centres to promote and support volunteering in general, and to benefit both individual citizens and organisations.

#### **4.4 The tasks and services of volunteering infrastructure**

The existing volunteering infrastructure in the eight researched cases is the result of autonomous developmental processes that have taken place over the past fifty years. This infrastructure largely lacks a sense of cohesive strategy or preconceived plan for long-term sustainability. Comparison of the roles played by the local volunteer infrastructure to promote and support volunteering in the eight cases reveals surprising similarities. In most cases, volunteer centres start with brokerage, in order to support the volunteer policies of organisations, and then gradually expand into development agencies, in order to implement governmental volunteering policies as well (Section 3.2). This section begins by describing the tasks and services that have been assigned to local volunteer centres in each country. These descriptions are followed by a summary of the national findings according to six functions that are considered as universal characteristics of volunteer centres.

In 2005, FriSe, the Danish national umbrella organisation for volunteer centres and self-help projects collaborated with its local member organisations to develop ‘best practice’ guidelines for volunteer centres (Henriksen, 2008, 8; Textbox 16). Based on these guidelines, the Ministry of Social Affairs formulated the main values and functions of ‘fully equipped volunteer centres’ and the appropriate methods to pursue these functions (and the associated tasks and services). A survey conducted in 2005/2006 provided information about the percentage of volunteer centres that had included several of the tasks in their portfolios (Henriksen, 2008, 10).

Textbox 16: ‘Best practice’ guidelines for Danish volunteer centres (based on Henriksen, 2008, 8).



1. Connecting people to volunteering opportunities by:
    - *Maintaining a job bank*
    - *Campaigning and promoting volunteering opportunities (78%)*
    - *Matching volunteers with voluntary organisation jobs (6%)*
    - *Introducing volunteering to potential volunteers*
  2. Supporting local social innovation and development by:
    - *Supporting and helping new projects and organisations with funding applications (68%)*
    - *Offering the use of premises and office facilities*
    - *Creating networks among new initiatives*
    - *Consulting with organisation leaders*
  3. Support and consultancy to existing associations and organisations by (62%):
    - *Offering the use of premises and office facilities to existing (smaller) organisations*
    - *Offering courses for the volunteers and managers of voluntary organisations (65%)*
    - *Consulting with the managers of organisations*
    - *Maintaining a local guide of organisations and associations*
  4. Creating networks among citizens and associations by:
    - *Fostering local network and contacts*
    - *Supporting networks between citizens*
    - *Serving as a local umbrella organisation for local associations (40%)*
  5. Providing information and support to citizens and users by:
    - *Offering advice and advocacy*
    - *Referring to human service organisations*
    - *Publishing and distributing newsletters*
    - *Maintaining a list of local cultural and social activities*
  6. Organising self-help groups by:
    - *Coordinating and initiating self-help groups (6%)*
    - *Announcing self-help groups*
    - *Offering courses to help people start self-help groups*
    - *Referring people to self-help groups*
- In parentheses the percentage of Danish volunteer centres that performed the mentioned tasks and functions in 2006 (Henriksen, 2008, 10)

In England, volunteer centres have historically been seen as clearing houses at the local level. Although placing volunteers continues to be their key function, only a very small proportion of volunteers find their volunteering opportunities through volunteer centres (Howlett, 2008, 1), as few as two per cent, according to some surveys (Davis Smith, 1998b; Low and colleagues, 2007). Nevertheless, volunteer centres remain important at the local level, as they perform other tasks in addition to brokerage and play a much fuller role as local development agencies (Howlett, 2008, 2; Rochester and colleagues, 2010, 224). Penberthy and Forster (2004, 16) divide the various activities of volunteer centres into the six following functions:

- Brokerage;
- Promoting volunteering;
- Enabling participation in volunteering by offering appropriate opportunities;
- Providing information, training and research on volunteering;
- Commenting on and campaigning for volunteering and related issues;
- Developing volunteering in partnership with other local agencies and groups.

In England, the policy document *Volunteering: A code of good practice* (Home Office, 2001) recognises the value of volunteering infrastructure and defines local volunteer centres according to eight functions that more or less coincide with the six functions mentioned above. In order to encourage the strategic and cohesive delivery of specific functions at the local, regional and national levels, Volunteering England (the national volunteer centre) further developed and simplified the existing and incoherent list of volunteer

centre's functions. The proposed revision that was presented in the Volunteering England 2003 comment paper received wide support and was subsequently adopted (Textbox 17).

Textbox 17: Redefined functions for local, regional and national volunteering infrastructure (based on Penberthy and Forster, 2004, 17)

- *Brokerage*
- *Marketing volunteering*
- *Developing good practices*
- *Developing volunteering opportunities*
- *Policy response and campaigning*
- *Strategic development of volunteering*

Finnish volunteer centres are usually small and largely concentrated on the function of brokerage. They focus on activities in the care sector, and they recruit volunteers to help others. The Red Cross is one of the largest hosts of volunteer centres, which it runs through its local branches (Hilger, 2008b, 6). At the national level, the Citizen Forum (*kansalaisareena*), a kind of national volunteer centre, promotes active citizenship and voluntary activity, and it acts as a service centre for volunteers, other voluntary organisations and professionals working in the field on volunteering (Kansalaisareena, 2009). The Citizen Forum provides the following services:

- Local and national events for networking and joint action;
- Training, consultative services and other support and guidance;
- The website [www.kansalaisareena.fi](http://www.kansalaisareena.fi) and its services;
- Gathering, disseminating and publishing information;
- Advocacy;
- Development projects and cooperation with any relevant stakeholders.

In 1999, the German volunteer centres formed the German National Cooperation of Volunteer Centres (BAGFA).<sup>57</sup> Twice each year, BAGFA organises a national conference to develop and enter quality standards for daily practice in the volunteer centres. In 2001, BAGFA received support from the *Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend*<sup>58</sup> to conduct an elaborate survey of the 190 German volunteer centres (Ebert and colleagues, 2002). According to the results of this survey, German volunteer centres perform the following functions (in parentheses the percentage of German volunteer centres that in 2002 performed the mentioned tasks and functions):

- Informing and advising volunteers (100%);
- Informing and advising volunteer-involving organisations (95%);
- Promotion (96%);
- Advocacy (81%);
- Training volunteers and professionals (72%);
- Development & innovation (71%);

The BAGFA handbook for quality management (BAGFA, 2005), added a seventh function – cooperation with businesses – to this list in 2005.

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<sup>57</sup> Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freiwilligenagenturen

<sup>58</sup> Ministry for Family, Seniors, Women and Youth

Italian volunteer centres provide services, free of charge, to registered and non-registered NPOs, and to citizens who want to engage in volunteering. In 2001, 51 volunteer centres were operating in 16 of the 21 regions. A national survey (CESIAV, 2001) revealed substantial consistency across the volunteer centres with regard to the fields of intervention and the growth in number of services provided (Textbox 18).

Textbox 18: Services provided by volunteer centres (based on Palma and Paganin, 2002, 68)

- *Information (98%): e-newsletters, Internet sites, periodicals ;*
- *Training (90%): seminars and courses for volunteers;*
- *Advice and counselling (90%): capacity building, legal, fiscal, HRM, social security;*
- *Promotion (84%): opportunities, campaigns, publications, activities with schools;*
- *Logistic services (80%): office space, computers, equipment, communication services;*
- *Help with project planning (74%): supply of funds, co-funding of projects;*

*In parentheses the percentage of Italian volunteer centres, that performed the mentioned tasks and functions in 2002.*

In 2007, the national budget available for the 72 regional and 345 local volunteer centres amounted to EUR 108 million. All volunteer centres together serve 57% of all voluntary organisations in Italy. Organisations that use their services are active in many different fields, although the majority are in the sectors of social assistance (35%) and health (22%). Smaller percentages of the organisations are involved in other fields: recreation, culture and sport (11%), civil protection (9%), education and research (6%), environment (6%), protection of rights (6%), cooperation and international solidarity (2%). Volunteer centres provide a variety of services, depending on the local needs of voluntary organisations (Macchioni, 2007, 5).

The functions of volunteer centres in Italy have been defined as follows (Macchioni, 2007, 6):

- Promotion of volunteering and solidarity through public events and conferences; specific programmes to promote the active involvement of young people, elderly people and ethnic minorities in the community; school-related volunteer- information desks in high schools; civil service;
- Consultancy to NPOs with regard to legal provisions, institutional requirements, rolls and registers, fiscal and administrative support, insurance and management;
- Communication for voluntary organisations, web portals, websites and communication material for voluntary organisations, press services for volunteering initiatives;
- Training and education on general issues and basic competencies in specific fields for volunteer representative bodies, volunteer managers and coordinators, volunteers and other parties who are involved with volunteers;
- Information, documentation and research;
- Project support to organisations: In 2007, volunteer centres supported voluntary organisations in 3,500 projects that had a combined value of more than EUR 23 million. The support that volunteer centres provide to voluntary organisations consists largely of consultancy, human resources and, in special cases, economic resources within specific granting schemes and agreements.

In the Netherlands, the national government initiated and implemented the systematic development of local volunteering infrastructure between 1972 and 1985. In 1972, the

government launched experiments with local volunteer centres in two Dutch cities (Tilburg and Arnhem). A national advisory body followed and reviewed the progress of these experiments, which ultimately lasted until 1977. At the end of the first stage of the experiment in 1975, the advisory body concluded that promoting volunteering actually calls for a process of community development. According to the advisory board, the initiation of such a process requires the following functions:

- Coordinating
- Advising
- Initiating
- Coaching
- Stimulating.

The advisory body considers these functions coherent and inextricably related to each other, and it distinguishes a number of partial operations that are necessary to perform these functions properly (CRM, 1975a, 185), including the following:

- Matching between volunteers and organisations;
- Matching between volunteers and individuals in need of help;
- Providing information about volunteering;
- Referring people in need to the appropriate agencies for assistance;
- Offering initial relief to people in need of help;
- Acting as information point about local resources;
- Delivering facilities and services to initiatives;
- Providing publicity about volunteering.

When the number of local Dutch volunteer centres expanded to 20 in 1981, the national government defined their functions as follows: information, documentation, publicity, advice, matching and the identification of gaps and impediments, as well as involvement in new voluntary initiatives (CRM, 1981, 105). In 1980, the existing local volunteer centres established a national association (the National Association of Volunteer Centres)<sup>59</sup> to represent their common interests (Bos, 2006, 9). In 1998 (Meijs and Stubbe, 2001, 45), this association (which later transformed into the Association of Dutch Voluntary Effort Organisations)<sup>60</sup> defined six functions for volunteer centres (Textbox 19). In 1986, the national government transferred responsibility for providing local volunteering infrastructure to local municipalities.

Textbox 19: Functions of Dutch volunteer centres

- *Matching*
- *Information and advice*
- *Advocacy*
- *Promotion*
- *Training*
- *Development*

As described by Lorentzen and Dugstad (2008, 6), volunteer centres in Norway were 'a solution without a defined problem' when they were established in 1991. They were the

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<sup>59</sup> *Landelijke Vereniging Vrijwilligerscentrales (LVV)*

<sup>60</sup> *Nederlandse Organisaties Vrijwilligerswerk (NOV)*

result of a general political will to encourage volunteering, especially within the social field. The first volunteer centres started with an open-ended, bottom-up programme, without clear ideas about functions or roles of government-funded volunteering (Section 4.3). Their main goals involved the mobilisation and coordination of volunteering. Mobilisation refers to the development of voluntary activities in the areas of leisure and community and the provision of material or emotional assistance to volunteers. Coordination refers to the realisation of improvements in the collaboration between local associations and local authorities (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 8; Lorentzen and Henriksen, 2011). The Norwegian government did not present further specification of the roles and functions of volunteer centres until 2007. Instead of establishing and arranging their own activities, volunteer centres are now expected to focus primarily on supporting both new initiatives and existing projects and activities, and to stimulate participation and volunteering in the local community. In 2007, the government redefined volunteer centres as *community centres* and assigned them the following functions and roles (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 13):

- Addressing a wide range of leisure, community as well as social caring activities;
- Adopting a sector-transcending approach;
- Providing coordination between associations, volunteers and local authorities;
- Stimulating motivation for local commitment and interaction between voluntary and public activities;
- Offering associations information and expertise on volunteer policy and management.

Although the national government continues to support local volunteer centres, these centres should be aware that they are performing volunteering policies within municipal structures.

While some Norwegian volunteer centres are already functioning as community centres, the practices of others are farther away from the government's intentions. The form of ownership is a possible explanation for this difference: while some volunteer centres are classified as 'civilian', the municipality (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 14) owns others.

Allen (1986, 4) characterises volunteer centres in the United States according to the following three tasks:

- Volunteer centres are leaders, pioneers in recruiting and placing volunteers, in working for more effective management of volunteers, in making volunteering a 'household word';
- Volunteer centres are models, demonstrating for the total community innovative and effective ways to reach out to new people, to involve them with the maximum impact and to apply volunteering to the difficult human and social problems our nation faces;
- Volunteer centres are resources, organisations with the expertise, skills and knowledge needed by both private organisations and public agencies, by the for-profit workplace as well as not-for-profit service providers, by civic associations, neighbourhood groups and advocates of social change, resources to help mobilise the time, talent and energy of all Americans.

In the same analysis, Allen (1986, 7) attributes eight functions to 'well-developed volunteer centres':

- Volunteer recruitment/Referral/Placement;
- Consultation and training;
- Promotion;
- Recognition;
- Resource for information on volunteering;
- Program development and community planning;
- Advocacy;
- Programme administration and support;

Over time, the focus of the volunteer centre's work has shifted from solving problems in the community to the recruitment and referral of volunteers (Brudney, 2005a, 82). According to results from *The Points of Light Foundation Volunteer Center National Network Assessment Tool* conducted in 2004, the 334 member volunteer centres (Brudney, 2005b) shared the next common vision: 'Volunteer Centers mobilize people and resources to deliver creative solutions to community problems. To achieve this mission volunteer centres are charged with four core responsibilities:

- Connecting people with opportunities to serve;
- Building the capacity for effective local volunteering;
- Promoting volunteering;
- Participating in strategic initiatives that mobilise volunteers to meet local needs.

Member volunteer centres are required to meet programme standards in each of these core competences' (Brudney, 2005b, 28).

Based on the findings from the eight cases mentioned above, Section 4.5 proposes a template for a volunteering infrastructure.

## 4.5 A template for a local volunteering infrastructure

### 4.5.1 The six functions of volunteering infrastructure

A survey of the tasks, services and functions of volunteer centres in the eight cases examined in this study reveals many similarities. I consider the redefinition of functions proposed by Penberthy and Forster (2004, 33; Textbox 20) in their *Strategy for Volunteering Infrastructure 2004-2014* useful for a general definition. This redefinition represents a comprehensive and current summary of all the services, tasks and functions mentioned in this survey.

Textbox 20: Functions of volunteering infrastructure (based on Penberthy and Forster, 2004, 33)

**Brokerage:** *This is the primary function of which many other local functions are a sub-set/delivery mechanism. The volunteering infrastructure will have a clear understanding of the role, range and remit of voluntary and community activity. It will hold information on a wide range of volunteering opportunities. It will seek out information on a comprehensive range of volunteering opportunities. It will offer potential volunteers support and advice in matching their motivations to volunteer with appropriate volunteering opportunities.*

**Marketing Volunteering:** *The volunteering infrastructure will aim to stimulate and encourage interest in voluntary and community activity. It will market and promote volunteering through local, regional, and national events and campaigns. It will have publicity materials targeted at different groups of potential volunteers. It will manage and promote a national consumer facing brand for local volunteering infrastructure. Marketing and*

promotional activities will be delivered creatively (whilst not forgetting simple things work), in innovative ways, within the statutory, voluntary and private sectors. It will deliver a variety of positive messages about the benefits, diverse nature, and conditions of volunteering and make full use of the latest technology to promote its work.

**Good-practice development:** The volunteering infrastructure will have a commitment to promoting good practice in working with volunteers to all volunteer involving organisations, and will actively support this. It will work to increase the volunteering knowledge base of its own staff and volunteers as well as of other individuals, organisations, and groups at all levels. It will develop and deliver training and accreditation strategies for potential volunteers, volunteers, Volunteer Managers and volunteering infrastructure organisations. It will hold resource and training packs. It will ensure that all the information it holds is available to other agencies, individuals, and groups. It will offer volunteer-specific training to existing and prospective volunteers and to staff and volunteers from volunteer involving organisations. It will be aware of, and implement, best practice in delivering training to various groups and individuals in different settings. It will regularly be contacted by other agencies, groups, and individuals seeking information about volunteering issues.

**Developing volunteering opportunities:** The volunteering infrastructure will take a strategic approach to the development of volunteering opportunities. It will work in close partnership with other statutory, voluntary and private sector agencies, as well as with community and faith groups, to develop volunteering. Locally it will also have an understanding of the potential within the community in which it operates and have clear plans working to realise that potential. The volunteering infrastructure will ensure that its services are accessible, and that it communicates clearly to individuals, organisations, and groups at all levels. It will implement an equal opportunities policy, with a clear commitment to diversity, equality anti-oppressive practice. It will target its promotion of volunteering on specific groups of people who face barriers to volunteering. [...] The volunteering infrastructure will work creatively to develop imaginative, non-formal opportunities for potential volunteers.

**Policy response and campaigning:** The national volunteering infrastructure will devise and lead on policy development which serves to influence and create a social policy climate in England (and by extension the UK and Europe) which is volunteer-friendly and volunteer-literate. This will be informed by experiences of practitioners. The volunteering infrastructure will maintain awareness of local, regional and national government proposals and policies which may have an impact on volunteers. It will lead and/or participate in campaigns on issues that affect volunteers and volunteering. The volunteering infrastructure will seek recognition as the first port of call whenever the media seek a comment related to volunteering. It will campaign regularly and proactively for increased awareness of volunteering and for a more volunteer-literate and volunteer-friendly climate. It will support people who wish to volunteer to effect positive social change and improve the quality of life in their community. It will challenge received wisdom about the capacity of existing service provision and about the ways in which people can or cannot be involved in volunteering and its development.

**Strategic development of volunteering:** Volunteering England will take strategic responsibility for the support and development of local and regional infrastructure; good practice development and sectoral networks. It will take a strategic approach to the development of social policy at local, regional, and national levels, aiming to support proposed changes which would facilitate volunteering and challenge proposed changes which could inhibit volunteering. It will monitor and evaluate the impact of the volunteering infrastructure. The volunteering infrastructure will maintain awareness of the volunteering needs and existing practices of all volunteer-involving organisations. It will have close links with those organisations and groups, and be actively involved in relevant networks.

#### **4.5.2 Three levels of support**

Based on the descriptions mentioned above, the term *volunteer centre* is used in this research to refer to an organisation that provides infrastructure for the promotion, stimulation and development of volunteering in general, primarily at the local level, by offering support on three levels:

- Volunteer support: for example, connecting citizens with appropriate volunteering opportunities through information, referral, advice and by developing new opportunities for volunteer effort;

- **Management support:** for example, providing volunteer administrators with recruitment, consultation, training, networks, good practices and new strategies for volunteer management;
- **Community support:** for example, creating the preconditions for civic participation, community development and corporate partnership through advocacy and the development of strategies for governmental volunteering policies, public recognition and capacity building.

The local Volunteer Centre Arnhem (*Vrijwilligerscentrale Arnhem*, 2004) first distinguished these three levels of support in its 2003 Annual Report. The same distinction was introduced simultaneously but independently by Meijs<sup>61</sup> in a lecture at the annual Dutch Volunteer Centre conference that was held in Ede in October 2003. NOVi, the branch organisation for local volunteer centres in the Netherlands has generally adopted this distinction.

Local volunteer centres around the world are becoming increasingly aware that these three levels of support are inextricably related and that all of them should be available locally (Graff, 1997; Osborne, 1999b; Meijs and Stubbe, 2001; Ebert and colleagues, 2002). The extent to which citizens are willing to volunteer is less dependent upon the success of recruitment campaigns than it is on the availability of attractive opportunities and preconditions for volunteering (Rochester and colleagues, 2010, 224). Organisations are responsible for creating these opportunities and preconditions. Finally, governments and the boards of NPOs should provide the means with which to create the climate, context, culture and conditions that stimulate volunteer involvement.

#### **4.5.3 Volunteering infrastructure: functions associated with levels of support**

Given that volunteering infrastructure has the mission of supporting volunteers, organisations and volunteerism in general (Section 4.5.1) by performing six functions (Textbox 20), I outline a template for a volunteering infrastructure, as shown in Table 11. The six functions in this template are coherent and inextricably related, and they are applicable on all three levels of support.

Table 11: Template for a volunteering infrastructure

Function / Level of support	Volunteer	Organisation	Community
<b>Brokerage</b>			
<b>Marketing volunteering</b>			
<b>Good-practice development</b>			
<b>Developing volunteering opportunities</b>			
<b>Policy response &amp; campaigning</b>			
<b>Strategic development of volunteering</b>			

I have presented and discussed this template on various occasions and in several countries, both with practitioners working in the volunteering infrastructure and with scholars studying volunteering (Section 2.3.2.4) and obtained their agreement with this definition.

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<sup>61</sup> 2004, Lucas Meijs accepted the Endowed Chair for Volunteering, Civil Society and Business at RSM Erasmus University Rotterdam



## 4.6 Incorporation of common goals and operational standards

In all of the cases examined, local and regional volunteering infrastructures have established their own national networks. Some of these networks are independent, while others are embedded in or supported by a national volunteer centre (Table 12). In Norway, for example, the Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs has provided volunteer centres with networks and support since 2005 (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 12).

Table 12: National networks

Country	National network of volunteer centres	Websites
Denmark	Frivilligcentre og Selvhjelp Danmark (FriSe)	<a href="http://www.frise.dk">www.frise.dk</a>
England	Volunteering England	<a href="http://www.volunteering.org">www.volunteering.org</a>
Finland	Kansalaisareena	<a href="http://www.kansalaisareena.fi">www.kansalaisareena.fi</a>
Germany	Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Freiwilligenagenturen BAGFA	<a href="http://www.bagfa.de">www.bagfa.de</a>
Italy	CSVnet	<a href="http://www.csvnet.it">www.csvnet.it</a>
Netherlands	NOV/NOVi	<a href="http://www.nov.nl">www.nov.nl</a>
Norway	Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs	<a href="http://www.regjeringen.no">www.regjeringen.no</a>
United States	Points of Light & Hands On Network	<a href="http://www.pointsoflight.org">www.pointsoflight.org</a>

Reinforcing the quality of volunteer centres' operational processes and the branding of the unique identity of the local volunteering infrastructure sector are the primary goals of these national networks. National surveys investigating the performance of local volunteer centres are an important tool for monitoring the achievement of these goals (Table 13).

Table 13: Date of first national survey of volunteer centre performance

Country	National survey of volunteer centres	Resources
Denmark	2005	Henriksen (2008, 3)
England	1997	Osborne (1999b)
Finland	2006	Hilger (2006a)
Germany	2002	Ebert and colleagues (2002)
Italy	1997	Paganin (2001, 8)
Netherlands	2001	Meijs and Stubbe (2001)
Norway	1992	Lorentzen (2005)
United States	1993	Brudney (2003, 1)

The results of these surveys show that national organisations in a number of the cases use special programmes to encourage local volunteer centres comply with and incorporate common goals and operational standards. In Norway, the main funder (the national government) imposes these goals and standards. In other cases, local volunteer centres (which are largely dependent on local funding) are free to comply with such goals and standards. Finland is the only country in which such goals and standards are still absent (Table 14).

Table 14: Incorporation of common goals and standards

Country / Common goals	Free	Imposed	Accredited
Denmark	x		x (% unknown)
England	x		x (100%) <sup>62</sup>
Finland			
Germany	x		x (22%)
Italy	x		x (60%)
Netherlands	x		x (17%)
Norway		x (100%)	
United States	x		x (70%)

The following discussion provides an overview of programmes that volunteer centres in seven of the eight cases addressed in this study apply in order to brand their sectors and improve their operational models.

Volunteer centres in Denmark recently agreed on six functions, along with the appropriate methods to pursue these functions and the tasks resulting from these methods (Henriksen, 2008, 8; Section 4.3). Because of a municipal reform in 2005, which reduced the number of local municipalities from 275 to 99, the distribution of volunteer centres throughout the country became more even, with resources concentrated in the larger centres: one in every second municipality (Lorentzen and Henriksen, 2011, 12). This reform created a better fit between volunteer centres and a new local administrative and political structure. A three-year national development fund for volunteer centres (2005-2007) strengthened the effect of this reform and to a gradual homogenisation of functions among Danish volunteer centres. State and local governments are increasingly using the six functions to review the performance of volunteer centres (Henriksen, 2008, 10). Although Denmark has yet to develop a formal quality management system, quality standards are applied implicitly.

For more than 30 years, volunteer centres in England have been discussing common goals and standards. These discussions have been an integral part of activities and meetings in the volunteer-centre sector, but they were not formalised until the *Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation (VCQA)* was established in 2004. The first joint meeting of all volunteer centres and Volunteer Organisers in Social Services (VOISS) in London was held in January 1986, focusing on two main themes: the need for effective and systematic communication between volunteer centres and VOISS, and the need for coordination of policy and practice. These topics generated discussion about the desirability of developing joint Codes of Good Practice that would address such matters as inappropriate and appropriate uses of volunteers, training and support, expenses, references, equal opportunities (Sheard, 1986). Since April 1987, the adoption of a statement of intent regarding equality of opportunity has been a pre-requisite for membership in the National Association of Volunteer Bureaux (NAV B, 1991). In 1989, volunteer centres adopted a Code of Practice (Volunteering England, 1998).

In 1995, the NAV B published an 'Outline Specification for a Quality Volunteer Bureau'. This document (NAV B, 1995) identifies baseline data and elements common to all high-quality volunteer-centre services. The NAV B cannot impose this framework, as it sub-

<sup>62</sup> In England, the name 'Volunteer Centre' is reserved for organisations that are accredited according the Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation (VCQA). See the discussion later in this section.

scribes to the fundamental premise that every volunteer centre is locally self-determining and self-developing and free to assign priority to activities and services that address local needs. The outline specification represents a model that autonomous local groups can choose to adopt when setting up a new agency. The NAVB enumerates the advantages of commitment to the expanding network of volunteer centres: common understanding and collaboration that can lead to new approaches and new solutions, facilities for sharing information and resources, capacity building (in relation to both internal operations and external marketing) and greater visibility and impact. To emphasise and cultivate consistent, high-quality and reliable service, NAVB recommends that all volunteer centres present a shared identity and style, which can be followed through in publicity and promotional materials (NAVB, 1995).

By 1998, the number of volunteer centres in England had increased to more than 535 (Volunteering England, 1998). The annual meeting of the NAVB in that year demonstrates the relative distance between its members according to several characteristics. The annual income of the volunteer centres ranged from as little as £ 2,000 to more than £500,000. While NAVB requires all of its members to provide excellent services, the differences in provision and outlook are striking. An increasing number of volunteer centres were expanding into local volunteering development agencies. In addition to recruiting and placing volunteers, they were starting to support NPOs, promote good practices and develop new areas of provision (Green, 1998). Although many volunteer centres were eager to take on this type of developmental role, lack of funding often interfered with this ambition, particularly for local volunteering development agencies that had been set up with a two-year *Make A Difference* grant. These agencies were facing closure unless sufficient local money was available to replace the grant from the central government. Both *Business in the Community* (2010)<sup>63</sup> and the Minister of State at the Home Office, Alun Michael (who was responsible for volunteering and the voluntary sector) acknowledged the importance of a consistent infrastructure for volunteering, with volunteer centres playing a crucial role. The most significant development, however, was expected to follow from the new governmental taskforce on the active community (Green, 1998).

In 1997-1998, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation sponsored research on the role of local development agencies. Using the results of this research, Osborne (1999a) explores the role of volunteer centres in promoting and supporting volunteering in local communities in England. Osborne distinguishes four key issues concerning the work of volunteer centres:

- Their role in promoting and supporting volunteering;
- Their structure and composition;
- The increasing complexity of their funding patterns;
- Their relationship with local Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS).<sup>64</sup>

In *The Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector in England* ('the Compact'), which was adopted in November 1998, the national

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<sup>63</sup> *Business in the Community* mobilises business for worthy causes and works with business to build a sustainable future for people and the planet.

<sup>64</sup> The more than 280 *Councils for Voluntary Service* (CVS) operate as local development agencies promoting effective voluntary action, throughout England (SCOV, 2010).

government promises a Code of Good Practice on Volunteering (Plowden, 2003). In his keynote speech entitled 'Third Sector, Third Way', at the annual conference of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), former Prime Minister Tony Blair emphasised the development of civil society, which implies a central role for voluntary action and volunteering (Howlett and Locke, 1999). Government activity encourages thinking about the future of the volunteering infrastructure. The *Compact Code on Volunteering* (Home Office, 2001) and subsequent government publications and consultations highlight the importance of such an infrastructure.

Shortly before the adoption of the Compact Code, the NAVB published *Going the Extra Mile* (NAVB, 2001) and simultaneously launched an associated quality-accreditation process for the core functions of volunteer centres, as specified in the publication. Together, these two documents represent the first codification of the expectations and functions of the volunteering infrastructure in England.

Between the autumn of 2001 and the spring of 2002, the NAVB clarified its vision, mission, aims and objectives, re-branding itself as *Volunteer Development England*. This strategic review exposed the major crisis in the funding of local volunteering infrastructure. The government acknowledged this fact and provided an Emergency Fund for Volunteer Bureaux and Councils for Voluntary Service 2002/03. This was the first example of government involvement in the core funding of the existing local volunteering infrastructure organisations (Penberthy and Forster, 2004, i).

Following strategic reviews in Volunteer Development England and the National Centre for Volunteering in the summer of 2002, the two Executive Committees discussed whether it would be better to pursue the establishment of volunteering infrastructure at a national level separately or jointly. At the same time, the Consortium on Opportunities for Volunteering was seeking a closer alliance or merger with a major national volunteering infrastructure organisation. In September 2002, the boards of these three organisations accepted a proposal to combine and to create a new volunteer development agency for England: Volunteering England, which was established in April 2004 (Penberthy and Forster, 2004, i).

In September 2002, the Treasury and Home Office identified the necessity of providing appropriate volunteering infrastructure locally, regionally and nationally (HM Treasury, 2002). A number of publications from these two departments concerning volunteering infrastructure followed, culminating in *ChangeUp* (Penberthy and Forster, 2004, i). Throughout this period, Volunteer Development England continued to discuss and consult with a range of stakeholders on issues regarding infrastructure support, and they developed responses to government consultations in this area. In late 2003, the results of these processes were published (Penberthy and Forster, 2003), and they were used to shape the outlines for a strategic document entitled *Building on Success: Strategy for Volunteering Infrastructure 2004-2014* (Penberthy and Forster, 2004). This strategy was presented at the April 2004 Volunteering England conference for volunteering infrastructure organisations. *Building on Success* is a companion strategy to the Home Office's *ChangeUp* (Home Office, 2004) initiative. According to this strategy, 'Volunteering infrastructure exists to encourage people to volunteer, to make the process of engaging in voluntarism as easy as possible and to ensure that the quality of the volunteering experience is as good as it can be' (Penberthy, 2004, 4).

The above mentioned *Compact* (Plowden, 2003) offered a general framework for a governmental policy to invest in capacity building and infrastructure provision. In addition, at least 90% of the local authorities developed (or are in the process of developing) local compacts: agreements along the lines of the national agreement that are intended to establish cooperation and partnership between local bodies and voluntary organisations, as well as to facilitate access to funding (Spes, 2006, 134). Local Compact Steering Groups ensure the awareness of the importance to invest in the reinforcement of the voluntary sector. At the national level, the *Cross Cutting Review* (HM Treasury, 2002) identified the need for investment in the voluntary sector and established the *Future Builders Fund* (£125 million) for this purpose in 2004. The *Cross Cutting Review* also addresses the issue of organisational infrastructure, with a particular focus on 'service centres' operating on both the local and the national level. Within the same context (i.e. cooperation and substitution by the third sector in providing services to the public), *ChangeUp* (Home Office, 2004) included a proposed increase of £80 million to stimulate activities in the nonprofit sector (Spes, 2006, 134).

In the foreword to *ChangeUp* (Home Office, 2004, 1), Home Office Minister Fiona MacTaggart writes, 'Voluntary and community activity is a crucial part of public life – connecting people and helping them to shape their communities'. The aim of this policy framework is as follows: '[...] by 2014 the needs of frontline voluntary and community organisations will be met by support which is available nationwide, structured for maximum efficiency, offering excellent provision which is accessible to all while reflecting and promoting diversity, and is sustainably funded' (Home Office, 2004, 7). The high-level objectives of *ChangeUp* with regard to recruiting and developing volunteers are as follows:

- There is a leaner, effectively marketed and high quality volunteering infrastructure reaching, recruiting and placing a greater number and diversity of individuals coupled with improved volunteer management (Home Office, 2004, 37);
- There should be provision for local volunteer engagement and organisational support and development, through volunteer centres, in all areas of the country by 2009 (Home Office, 2004, 38);
- There should be a commonly branded local volunteering infrastructure linked to the achievement of quality standards available from the end of 2005 (Home Office 2004, 38).

At the start of the first National Volunteers' Week in June 2004, volunteer centres expressed massive approval for the recommendation to adopt a common consumer brand for volunteering infrastructure providers. It was decided to change all of the various names under which they had been operating to a single, consistent term (volunteer centres), and to adopt the national agency's common brand identity. Since that time, only accredited agencies have been allowed to call themselves volunteer centres. To be accredited, a volunteer centre must deliver the six functions of volunteering infrastructure at a local level (Section 4.4; Textbox 17). The Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation (2010) is a quality framework that provides an assessment process examining the activity of a volunteer centre in the delivery of the six functions. For each of these functions, a volunteer centre is asked to demonstrate that it has processes in place to deliver that function and to monitor the outcome of its delivery. As of January 2010, 385 volunteer centres had received accreditation. According to Latifa Laanatz, VCQA Officer Volunteer-

ing England,<sup>65</sup> 'Volunteer centres are the biggest organised network in the country, who works with volunteering in the same way'.

Through its membership in the European Volunteer Centre (CEV), Finland is also attempting to develop a national strategy for establishing standards of good practices, including standards for volunteer centres. To date, Finland has no volunteer survey. The current debate on civil society organisations has tended to focus on topics related to associations and volunteering within them (Hilger, 2008b, 6).

As mentioned in Section 4.3, the national association of German volunteer centres (BAGFA) conducted a thorough survey of its 190 member agencies in 1999 (Ebert and colleagues, 2002). At the same time, a national Investigating Committee on the 'Future of Civic Activities' (Enquete-Kommission, 2002, 316) advised the federal government to establish a model programme to promote volunteer centres and to enable them to develop their professional profile.

Using support from the Robert Bosch Foundation and the Ministry for Family, Seniors, Women and Youth, BAGFA cooperated with 12 local volunteer centres to develop a handbook for quality management. In 2005, the handbook was made available to all volunteer centres interested in the incorporation of quality management into their organisations. As of January 2010, 57 volunteer centres had received accreditation in the quality standards.<sup>66</sup>

The fact that partners (e.g. local authorities or donors) expect volunteer centres to deliver reliable structures, competent contacts and creative ideas to involve citizens in their communities is the main impetus for the implementation of this Quality Management System (QMS). External evaluators award volunteer centres that incorporate the QMS with a quality seal. This system is intended to offer volunteer centres an incentive to improve their operations continuously. The QMS identifies standards for 11 core processes:

- Informing and advising volunteers;
- Informing and advising NPOs;
- Human resources and skills development for volunteers and professional staff;
- Work structures in the volunteer centre;
- Public relations;
- Sustainable quality management;
- Cooperation with companies;
- Developing skills for volunteers and professional staff inside NPOs;
- Development of new services and products;
- Finance;
- Volunteer services.

For each core process, the QMS identifies three features that it considers important to successful work and quality. For each of these features, the QMS subsequently defines five levels of competency at which volunteer centres demonstrate the feature: 1. not, 2. partial, 3. sufficient, 4. good, 5. excellent (BAGFA, 2007).

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<sup>65</sup> Latifa Laanatza, VCQA Officer Volunteering England, interviewed January 4, 2010

<sup>66</sup> Nicole Parduhn, officer of BAGFA, interviewed January 8, 2010

Italian volunteer centres provide a variety of services, depending on the needs of local voluntary organisations. Over time, substantial unity has emerged in the areas of intervention and growth in the number of services provided (Section 4.4). The first volunteer centres differed particularly in capacity and in the ability of their directors to nurture their development. Delay in the delivery of funds made it difficult for the early volunteer centres to hire paid staff or organise activities in advance. As a result, they were dependent on volunteers for the performance of activities. These experiences have helped newer volunteer centres to avoid such mistakes, and to have less difficulty planning and managing their activities. Once established in their regions, volunteer centres appear to be valuable resources for the promotion and development of volunteerism in Italy (Palma and Paganin, 2002). A continued increase in funding has allowed volunteer centres to finance voluntary projects (Paganin, 2001). This service distinguishes Italian volunteer centres from those in other cases. Approximately 60% of the volunteer centres in Italy codify the accessibility of services and the transparency of activities that they perform. The National Federation of Volunteer Centres promotes the utilisation of social accounting systems to identify and clarify objectives, to elaborate strategies, to improve work processes and to develop relations with local partners and municipal administrators. Many volunteer centres are committed to the acquisition of a quality certification. The certification process requires them to develop clear criteria for assessing the impact of their activities on the growth of volunteering in Italy (Spes, 2006, 285).

In May 2009, CSVnet (the national volunteer centre) published these criteria in its *Guidelines for the Assessment of services and activities of Italian Volunteer Centres* (CSVnet, 2010).<sup>67</sup> The *Guidelines* were developed jointly by CSVnet and the Institute for Social Research in Milan, and they are based on the experiences of volunteer centres. The policies and guidelines of CSVnet include the following items:

- Activity planning (biennial);
- Accountability;
- Management account;
- Professional cooperation/collaboration agreements;
- Governance of volunteer centres;
- Governance of regional coordination bodies;
- Social reports;
- Social planning.

A number of programmes were developed to introduce these *Guidelines* in volunteer centres. A team prepares a common set of guidelines and a web-based platform for collecting data in the 77 regional and provincial volunteer centres, according to the *Guidelines* for accountability and planning. These programmes provide volunteer centres with specific assessment tools that can help them to develop a clear understanding of their work and to achieve constant improvement in their activities. CSVnet uses a questionnaire to collect data each year regarding the performance of volunteer centres. Reviews are published yearly in Italian. Abstracts in English are not available.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> *Linee Guida per la Valutazione dei Servizi e delle Attività dei CSV*, May 2009.

<sup>68</sup> Ettore Degli Esposti, Regional Volunteer Centre Lombardia, Milan, interviewed January 5, 2010

In the Netherlands, the Association of Dutch Voluntary Effort Organisations (NOV)<sup>69</sup> made a statement in 1998 in which they expressed the ambition to establish a national network of local volunteer centres. A working group entitled 'Volunteer Centres Aspire to Quality' (later shortened to 'VAK operation')<sup>70</sup> defined the basic functions (Textbox 19) and qualifications that a volunteer centre must meet in order to qualify for a hallmark (NOV, 1998). The VAK operation distinguishes four categories of volunteer centres: junior, local broker, local development agency, development agency. A volunteer centre can develop from junior ultimately into development agency. Each category demands specific requirements that are determined according to eight features (Table 15).

Table 15: Four categories of volunteer centres and their features

Category/feature	Junior	Broker	local development agency	Development agency
1. Mission	present	present	present	present
2. Field size	-	-	40,000 inhabitants	> 100,000 inhabitants
3. Sales volume		> €10,000	> € 40,000	> € 150,000
4. Regional function	-	-	-	present
5. Minimum paid hours	-	12	24	48
6. Education paid staff	-	secondary	higher	higher/scientific
7. Number of functions	minimal brokerage	minimal 2, including brokerage	minimal 4, including brokerage	6
8. Number of projects			minimal 1 project	> 1 project

Each volunteer centre that acquires the hallmark receives an official plaque with one, two, three or four stars (depending on the assigned category) that can be displayed in its offices. As of December 2012, 21 of the 169 Dutch volunteer centres (NOV, 2010) had acquired a hallmark.

In 1991, Norwegian volunteer centres began to work on the concrete realisation of the general political desire to find volunteers who would be willing to serve, particularly in the social field (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 2). The national government did not wish to specify strict regulations for the organisation and operation of volunteer centres, preferring instead to stimulate experiments to test practical models (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 4). In 1998, after providing the administration of volunteer centres for 17 years, the government of Norway expressed its desire to alter the basic functions of the volunteer centres. In a white paper (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 13) the government presented a more specific description of the role and function of volunteer centres (Section 4.3). Although this policy document is still very recent and has not yet been accompanied with an enforced quality management system, it poses a dilemma for volunteer centres: 'Are we public units or do we belong to the voluntary sector?' The proposed role of community centres also brings volunteer centres into the interest sphere of umbrella organisations existing in the areas of the elderly, sports, culture, migrants and youth (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 14). It remains to be seen how volunteer centres will resolve this dilemma.

In the United States the Points of Light Foundation makes a significant contribution to the Volunteer Center National Network (VCNN) with the development and implementation of common goals and operational standards for volunteer centres throughout the country

<sup>69</sup> *Nederlandse Organisaties Vrijwilligerswerk (NOV)*: Association of Dutch Voluntary Effort Organisations

<sup>70</sup> *'Vrijwilligerscentrales Ambieën Kwaliteit' (VAK)*



(Brudney, 2005b, 6). In 1993, former Michigan Governor George Romney inspired the first meeting of the national network of volunteer centres, with the purpose of developing a common vision to solve social problems: 294 volunteer centres met at 17 regional meetings and one summit meeting (POLF, 2005). In the same year, the Points of Light Foundation launched a survey of volunteer centres in the United States, with the goal of obtaining and sharing information about volunteer centres and providing an internal yardstick or benchmark for informal comparison by individual volunteer centres every two years (Brudney, 2005b, 8). Consistent with the grassroots, locally driven nature of volunteer centres, each individual volunteer centre is free to follow general goals or guidelines.

Earlier, in 1975, a small group of practitioners in the National Information Center on Volunteerism (NICOV) was already developing scorecards for recommended practices, with 54 explicit benchmarks focusing on adequate infrastructure, sound business practices and programmatic growth (NICOV, 2003). About ten years later national, federally-sponsored agencies to promote volunteerism issued new statements regarding what was expected of volunteer centres. Examples of these expectations include the provision of administrative support and policies, programme administration, volunteer support systems, consultation and training and advocacy (Allen, 1986). Since 1998, The Points of Light Foundation has required its members to meet common operational and programmatic standards (Textbox 21).

Textbox 21: Points of Light Foundation standards

*Volunteer centres that are members of The Points of Light Foundation and VCNN share the following common vision: 'Volunteer centres mobilize people and resources to deliver creative solutions to community problems' (POLF, 2001, 2). To achieve this vision, volunteer centres are charged with four core responsibilities (Brudney, 2005b, 28):*

- *Connecting people with opportunities to serve;*
- *Building the capacity for effective local volunteering;*
- *Promoting volunteering;*
- *Participating in strategic initiatives that mobilize volunteers to meet local needs.*

Members first sign a partnership agreement, by which they subscribe the mission and goals of the Points of Light Foundation and agree to comply with basic criteria (e.g. having an operating board of directors, nonprofit tax status and an active programme of volunteer recruitment, placement and promotion). Second, member volunteer centres conduct a self-assessment on common standards and are asked to report the results to the Points of Light Foundation. With the self-assessment, volunteer centres evaluate their progress in meeting the 'standards of organisational and programmatic excellence'. For each standard, three levels of competency are specified: developing, advancing and excellence (Brudney, 2005a, 84). In 2001, 60% of the 408 volunteer centres that were members of the Points of Light Foundation participated in the self-assessment, increasing to 70% in 2002 (Brudney and Kim, 2003b). Every two years, the foundation conducts a national survey of the progress of volunteer centres in meeting these standards.

#### **4.7 Prospects for local volunteering infrastructure**

This chapter began with a description of developments that caused the emergence of local volunteering infrastructure. It then focused on the actual development of that infra-

structure, and defined its core functions and ambitions. This final section explores the future prospects of local volunteering infrastructure.

The legitimacy of volunteering infrastructure cannot be considered outside the context of the increasing political recognition of civil society and civic engagement. The political interest in the concepts of civil society and civic engagement in the eight cases investigated has caused volunteering to be rediscovered and reevaluated. Meanwhile, governments in these cases are using legal, financial, symbolic and organisational policy instruments (Hilger, 2008a, 184; Textbox 22) to execute civic engagement policies. The provision of volunteering infrastructure can be considered as an organisational measure.

Textbox 22: Policy instruments for civic engagement, from Hilger (2008a, 184)

- *Legal measures cover what a state allows or forbids. They structure the whole field of nonprofit activities in a fundamental way. There are, for example, obvious differences between systems relying on the principle of subsidiarity and those based on state-provided welfare services.*
- *Financial measures refer to programmes and projects the state supports through statutory funding and grants; but loans, contracting and fees belong here as well. Naturally, these measures are constrained by the state budget and have external effects in distorting the market allocation process. They do not necessarily lead to a self-sustaining process. In some fields, however, they might be the only incentive to induce action.*
- *Symbolic measures are connected with communication: here communicating the meaning of engagement and civil society-related information. Public speeches, certificates, events, codes of behaviour, referrals and benchmarking as well as web portals present engagement to citizens and provide for recognition and appreciation. Symbolic measures are an intrinsic part of politics since any measure has to be conveyed to society, but the act of communication itself can be considered a means to influence the state of affairs.*
- *Organisational measures consist of what the state creates to foster engagement. Typical measures are the inauguration of commissions, assistance bodies, networks; but also allowing the use of public infrastructure and the restructuring of public administration can influence engagement. Organisational measures can have important structuring effects.*

The proper assessment of the perspective and support for volunteering infrastructure requires the consideration of both organisational measures and measures that governments initiate in the other three domains mentioned in Textbox 22. A thorough examination of each of the four types of measures that governments in the eight cases under investigation have applied in each domain would exceed the scope of this research. It restricts to providing a global overview of data, focusing on organisational measures, and determining whether any valid conclusions can be drawn from this overview. Because civic engagement is also of interest to such supra-national institutions as the European Union (Held, 2010) and the United Nations (Davis Smith, 2003, 25), as well as the comparative Nonprofit Sector Project of the Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies, the examination also includes the policies and findings of these institutions where relevant in this context.

#### **4.7.1 Prospects in the eight cases**

In Denmark, the government is the primary actor with regard to the development of volunteering infrastructure. In 1983, the Minister of Social Affairs established the Danish Committee on Volunteer Effort, a political committee consisting of representatives from public authorities and voluntary organisations. This committee reinforces the possibility for individuals, groups of citizens, private associations and NPOs to participate in the solution of tasks in the social field. The committee also identifies barriers in this field and

submits proposals to eliminate them. In 1992, the *Center for frivilligt socialt arbejde*<sup>71</sup> was established on a national basis to promote and support the development of voluntary social work in Denmark. This Centre offers a range of services to volunteers, voluntary organisations, public authorities and others cooperating with NPOs. It further provides information on voluntary social work for the public and the press, and it serves as the secretariat for the Committee on Volunteer Effort (2010). Central government aid is provided by a number of different programmes, partly in the form of basic grants and partly in the form of project grants. Basic grants are awarded through the Danish Pools and Lotto Funds (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2001; Spes, 2009a, 147).

The new Social Services Act 1998 obliges counties and local authorities to support and cooperate with voluntary social organisations and associations at the local level. To facilitate compliance with this obligation, the central government provides an annual subsidy, for which local authorities are required to account through annual reports. Local organisations are allowed to comment on this report. The funding of local volunteer centres consists largely of this subsidy, combined with contributions from local authorities and charities (CEV, 2005). As a result of the Social Service Act, almost half of Denmark's counties and local authorities had set up various forms of joint consultation committees by the end of 1999 (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2001; Hal and colleagues, 2004, 70).

In 2000, the Danish government established an inter-ministerial task committee to identify legislative obstacles and develop initiatives in the field of voluntary action. This committee recommended consulting with voluntary organisations during the process of elaborating drafts of laws that affect them. In 2001, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Culture cooperated with NPOs to produce the *Charter on cooperation between Volunteer Denmark and the Public Sector* (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2001). The Charter advocates establishing the autonomy of volunteer associations as a fundamental condition for their existence and recognises the contribution of volunteering to individual and societal development. It also reveals the relative lack of active NPOs and stresses the need for government commitment to design laws that enhance the development of the voluntary sector (Textbox 23).

Textbox 23: Principles of the *Charter on cooperation between Volunteer Denmark and the Public Sector* (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2001)

- **Basis for voluntary work**

*The independence of organisations is a fundamental condition for voluntary work. The constitutional freedom of association is an important precondition for Volunteer Denmark. The commitment, responsibility and participation of individuals in society and its communities form the basis for voluntary work.*

- **Value of voluntary work**

*Voluntary work contributes to the welfare of the individual, the population and society in general. It creates human relations and networks. Volunteer Denmark provides opportunities for democratic learning and promotes an interest in the common good of all. Volunteer Denmark is thus of great importance to a living democracy.*

- **Interaction between the public sector and Volunteer Denmark**

*Interaction must be based on confidence in and respect for each other's tasks and roles. Voluntary sector initiatives should not replace public sector initiatives.*

Volunteering in Denmark is currently characterised by increased cooperation with the public sector and increased government financing. In 2004, the Ministry of Social Affairs

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<sup>71</sup> Danish Volunteer Centre

launched a national campaign to promote volunteering. The campaign includes the establishment of an Internet-based job portal (Frivilligjob, 2010) and a three-year development fund of approximately EUR seven million to support the establishment and development of volunteer centres (CEV, 2005).

This fund has two main goals: To enhance the quality of existing volunteer centres and to start new centres in geographic areas where none existed. Obviously, behind this agreement there is a political awareness that the idea of local volunteer centres could be important for, first, improving the infrastructure of the local voluntary sector, that is, those structures and institutions which foster more dense networks and strategic alliances between local organizations and associations as well as between public and voluntary sector, and, second, improving the problem solution capacity of the local voluntary social organisations (Henriksen, 2008, 2).

In the call for applications for this development fund, the Ministry of Social Affairs provided a description of a 'fully equipped volunteer centre' (Section 5.3.2; Henriksen, 2008, 8).

In 2009 (at the end of the three-year development programme), the Danish national government decided to establish a foundation that would provide DKK 20 million (€2.8 million) each year to volunteer centres. Beginning in 2010, this foundation has provided volunteer centres with more certainty and regular funding to build local capacity and infrastructure. To obtain funding from the state, local municipalities are required to finance an equal amount. Taken together, Danish volunteer centres have access to DKK 40 million (€5.6 million) each year. This represents permanent funding for about 40/50 local volunteer centres spread throughout the country.<sup>72</sup>

According to a report of the European Volunteer Centre (CEV 2005, 9):

[B]arriers to volunteering are still very strong in Denmark. Trade Unions resist the development of a legal framework for volunteers. Although there is a political will to strengthen the voluntary sector, there is still some way to go to remove all the obstacles to volunteering. In particular the fight for employee rights and protection is considered conflicting to the development of volunteerism (CEV 2005, 6).

According to Henriksen (2008, 12): the development of the Danish volunteering infrastructure:

[...] is a story of a constant struggle for organisational identity and public legitimacy. Today there are still questions about the value of local volunteer centres, but the professionalisation and homogenisation of the centres have - hand in hand with a broader discourse that stresses the importance of civil society actors, and increasing problems for the public sector to meet citizens' diverse welfare needs - made it more likely that there will be a future place for local volunteer centres.

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<sup>72</sup> Prof. Lars Skov Henriksen, Department of Sociology, Social Work and Organisation, Aalborg University. Interviewed January 27, 2010

Since the 1970s, governments in England have shown interest in volunteering. This interest has focused less on volunteering for its own sake than on volunteering as part of the wider debate on the role of individuals in relation to the state (Davis Smith, 1998a). For a long time, volunteering remained outside the state, almost by definition, as an activity involved with issues that the state could not, or would not, do something about. Volunteering infrastructure should be initiated by the private sector. Later, as governments came to recognise the meaning of volunteering and community involvement, they began to support volunteering infrastructure as well (Howlett, 2008, 2).

The Wolfenden Report on the Future of Voluntary Organisations (Wolfenden, 1978), was the first policy document to have an impact on the voluntary sector in the UK. This report considers voluntary organisations as a way to break state monopolies of service provision. Various British ministers have identified the following three key elements with regards to volunteering (Howlett, 2008, 4):

- The use of volunteers is a less expensive option for providing state welfare services;
- The use of volunteers can allow the state to restrict its welfare provisions to the level of a 'safety-net to cover those areas and issues not covered by volunteers';
- The efforts of volunteers help to preserve individualism in the face of widespread state provision of services.

In 1988, the Commission on Citizenship (2009) was established in order to 'encourage, develop and recognise Active Citizenship within a wide range of groups in the community, both local and national, including school students, adults, those in full employment, as well as volunteers'. The establishment of this commission provides evidence of political interest for volunteering.

Under the administration of John Major, the Make a Difference (MAD) programme operated from 1994 through 1996 (Davis Smith, 1998a), as an outline for a national Strategy for Volunteering. The programme included 81 recommendations for the government, commercial and voluntary sectors, and it called for commitment to achieve a comprehensive UK-wide network of mechanisms to support and develop local volunteering. In a 1993 address, Major stated, 'I am sure that many people would welcome the chance to help their neighbours and play a more active part in the life of their local community. We will find ways of building up a much more effective network of local volunteer support' (*Daily Mail*, 1 January 1993; cited in Davis Smith, 1998a, 8). In 1996, the MAD Local Volunteering Development Agencies (LVDA) Grants Programme awarded 60 grants to establish new volunteer centres in various districts and 70 grants to strengthen existing established volunteer centres. In evaluations of the MAD programme, the application process for these grants was criticised 'as having encouraged bidding organisations to make unrealistic promises' (Davis Smith, 1998a).

With the adoption of the *Compact* in November 1998, the national government promised to develop a Code of Good Practice on Volunteering (Plowden, 2003). In the keynote speech entitled *Third Sector, Third Way* at the annual conference of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), Prime Minister Tony Blair emphasised the development of civil society, which implies a central role for voluntary action and volunteering (Howlett and Locke, 1999). Government activity focused on considering the future of the volunteering infrastructure. The *Compact Code on Volunteering* (Home Office, 2001),

*ChangeUp* (Home Office, 2004) and subsequent government publications and consultations highlight the importance of such an infrastructure (Section 5.5).

The policy on *civil renewal*, the establishment of a Civil Renewal Unit at the Department for Communities and Local Government and the establishment of an *Active Citizenship Centre* for greater public involvement in service delivery, social capital and community cohesion illustrate the positive climate for volunteering that existed at that time within various governmental departments. The civil renewal policy, which was launched by the Home Secretary in 2003 (Blunkett, 2003), is composed of three key ingredients:

- Active citizens;
- Strengthened communities;
- Partnership with public bodies.

The 'Together We Can' initiative aims to encourage cooperation between individuals and the government to make life better, to make it possible for more people to have an influence on decisions concerning their communities and to persuade more people to take responsibility for addressing local problems rather than expecting others to solve them. Volunteering is considered a useful means of realising these aims (Rochester, 2006). According to the Commission on the Future of Volunteering in England, 'Volunteering has never had it so good. [...] While voluntary action has been a consistent feature of most societies the current weight of expectations about the contribution it can make to individual development, social cohesion and addressing social needs has never been greater, and it has a more prominent place on the agenda of public policy than ever before' (Rochester and colleagues, 2010, 1).

Although above-mentioned governmental policies express increasing support for volunteering and for volunteering infrastructure, there is little clear evidence that volunteer centres in England are taking advantage of this positive climate:

- [T]he research into progress of the ideas behind *Building on Success* shows that there has been little genuine buy in. It would appear that Volunteering England's aspirations for the network does not resonate at ground level. Volunteer centres are trying to cope with tensions between seeing themselves as second-tier infrastructure, strategically guiding volunteering, and viewing themselves as service providers (Rochester, Grotz and Forster, 2007, cited in Howlett, 2008, 14).
- Volunteer centres are in danger of being marginalised because their main funder – local government – does not distinguish the role of the centre from other providers. Why, for example pay for a local provider when do-it<sup>73</sup> exists nationally to broker volunteering opportunities? There is anecdotal evidence that Volunteering England's idea of one accountable volunteering infrastructure body per local authority area has been taken up by local government, who have zeroed in on CVSs [Councils for Voluntary Service] instead of volunteer centres (Howlett, 2008, 14).
- [T]he Commission for the Future of Volunteering – the body set up to provide a legacy after 2005 the Year of the Volunteer – published its report (The Commission for the Future of Volunteering, 2008). The Commission produced a 'manifesto' and not only does it fail to endorse the work of volunteer centres, its lame

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<sup>73</sup> A national database for volunteering opportunities

recommendation for funding was the only one not accepted by the government (Howlett, 2008, 14; Zimmeck, 2010, 130).

In Finland a general national governmental policy on volunteering infrastructure is still absent, although recent observations seem to predict modest parliament interest for volunteering policy. After municipalities, the Slot Machine Association (*RAY*) and the Finnish Federation for Social Welfare and Health are the most important funding resources for volunteering infrastructure (Hal and colleagues, 2004, 82; Spes, 2009b, 13). As Hilger (2008b, 8) describes:

The municipal volunteer service has been established around the turn of the millennium on the initiative of the Red Cross, congregations of the church and the social and health department of the city of Helsinki. The origin of the centres goes back to a project in the second half of the 1990s. The Red Cross and the church each maintained separate volunteer services until the idea emerged to put forces together by establishing 'one common telephone number' (Interviewee). Another important reason to establish it was the insight that one does not always need professional staff to help people in their daily affairs; also lay people are willing and able to care for others.

At the heart of the three municipal volunteer centres in East Helsinki, *Kampi* and *Malmi*, is the placement of volunteers. The general goals of voluntary effort are to strengthen the ability of people to help themselves, to prevent problems due to loneliness and advance the creation of community through volunteering. The outline for the volunteer centres also includes support for individuals who care for their relatives as well as for professional health care, home care and child protection services. Volunteering supported by Finnish volunteer centres is usually directed to persons, the person supported is conceptualised as a customer.

Finnish volunteer centres have the character of personal-assistance providers. In this respect, they differ from volunteer centres in other countries, which usually refer volunteers to NPOs in various societal sectors. Nonetheless, there are signs that suggest development in the near future. In 2009, the Finnish Parliament established an informal group (representing all political parties) that is trying to set up a nationwide strategy on volunteering. To determine the direction in which volunteering infrastructure should be developed, this group has consulted all ministries that have some connection with volunteering. To raise awareness for volunteering, all members of parliament have been invited to work as a volunteer somewhere. As of this writing, about 30% had responded to this call.<sup>74</sup>

Germany has a patchwork of infrastructure-providing organisations (Keupp, 2003), most of which were established in the last two decades years by both private and governmental parties at the local, national and federal levels:

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<sup>74</sup> Peter Hilger, PhD candidate, Department of Political Science, University of Helsinki, interviewed January 27, 2010 and February 11, 2010

Volunteer Centres<sup>75</sup>: The first volunteer centres in Germany were established by municipalities (Munich, 1980) and local groups (Berlin, 1988; Dortmund, 1994; Bremen, 1995). The establishment of these centres marked the beginning of the development of volunteering infrastructure. In 1996, the six major welfare associations that dominate the German social sector began to build volunteer centres. This was a significant change in a world that had been dominated by professional employees who considered volunteers as a threat to their paid professions. Stagnating welfare-state expenses and increasing market competition led welfare associations to start involving volunteers in the provision of public services. These agencies established volunteer centres in order to recruit volunteers, initially only for 'own use', and later for other agencies as well (Kamlage, 2008, 9; Zimmer and Backhaus-Maul, 2012, 37).

Senior Centres<sup>76</sup>: Between 1993 and 1997 the Federal Ministry of Families, Elderly People, Women and Youth launched the Federal Pilot Programme for Senior Centres<sup>77</sup> which focused on establishing a type of volunteer centre specifically for elderly people, in order to take full advantage of the resources and capabilities present at that stage of life (Kamlage, 2008, 8). Since the programme was established, 250 senior centres have been activating, supporting and managing volunteering by elderly people (Jakob, 2010, 239; Zimmer and Backhaus-Maul, 2012, 32).

Meeting points for self-help groups<sup>78</sup>: Since 2000, the 'Health Reform 2000' has been providing financial security to the self-help movement, as well as to the 212 Meeting Points that were established for self-help groups in the 1980s (Jakob, 2010, 242). The Meeting Points serve the entire spectrum of self-help groups in the health, psycho-social and social sector, thereby providing infrastructure for civic engagement within the healthcare system. These facilities are intended to promote collaboration between self-help groups, as well as cooperation with experts and institutions within the professional healthcare system. Public health insurance and municipalities provide financial support for the Meeting Points. Since 2008, the 'Law to strengthen competition in the statutory health insurance'<sup>79</sup> has served as a legal base for supporting self-help groups (Jakob, 2010, 242; Zimmer and Backhaus-Maul, 2012, 29).

Community foundations<sup>80</sup>: A new element was added to civil-society infrastructure in Germany in late 1996: *Bürgerstiftungen*,<sup>81</sup> which were modelled after the 'community foundations' existing in the United States. Community foundations perform a variety of tasks in the field of civic engagement within the local community. They promote social capital and foster volunteering activities in NPOs. They also provide financial support in municipalities and cities, and they often act as partners to local volunteer centres (Kamlage, 2008, 10). The rapid increase in the number of community foundations in Germany is considered an indicator of the changing power relations among the state, civil society and market (Anheier, 2003, 46, as cited in Kamlage, 2008, 10). At the end of 2008, the 237 active community foundations had a joint capital of EUR 110 million (Jakob, 2010, 244; Zimmer and Backhaus-Maul, 2012, 42).

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<sup>75</sup> *Freiwilligenagentur*

<sup>76</sup> *Seniorenbüros*

<sup>77</sup> *Bundesmodellprogram Seniorenbüros*

<sup>78</sup> *Selbsthilfekontaktstellen*

<sup>79</sup> *"Gesetz zur Stärkung des Wettbewerbs in der Gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung"*

<sup>80</sup> *Bürgerstiftungen*

<sup>81</sup> *Community Foundations*



Investigation Commission<sup>82</sup>: In 2002, the German Parliament published the report of the Investigation Commission for the Future of Civic Activities (Enquete-Kommission, 2002), with the purpose promoting civic activities and further developing civil society in general. The work of this commission affected the development of civic engagement and acknowledged the importance of volunteering infrastructure (Enquete-Kommission, 2002, 298-317). According to Kamlage (2008, 12-13), 'the commission [...] promoted an understanding of civic engagement, which included traditional voluntary activities (*Ehrenamt*) as well as new forms of civic engagement and citizen initiatives (*freiwilliges Engagement*). The commission also supported corporate social responsibility and demanded it from actors in the commercial sector. In addition, the commission developed policy proposals that called for more active promotion of civic engagement. These proposals had a major effect on subsequent governmental and private policies and activities at the federal, national and local levels'. Three examples of these proposals are described below.

Citizens for Citizens<sup>83</sup>: This foundation aims to strengthen voluntary and civic engagement in all of its forms and to emphasise publicly the importance of this engagement, both for a democratic society and for individuals. The foundation is intended as an open forum for discussion and as a service agency for providing basic information (Bürger für Bürger, 2010).

National Network for Civil Society (Bundesnetzwerk Bürgerschaftliches Engagement, 2010): According to its website, the *Bundesnetzwerk Bürgerschaftliches Engagement (BBE)* is:

[...] a nationwide network linking organisations and associations from the third sector (nonprofit organisations) and civil society, from business and work life and federal and community institutions. The cooperation within the network is based on mutual trust and partnership, relying primarily on dialogue, cooperation, and practical stimuli for the promotion of commitment and civic involvement. Everyone involved benefits from the cooperation and moves closer to the common goal. This common goal is the strengthening of civil society and of civic involvement. The key objective is the improvement of the general legal, organisational, and institutional conditions for civic involvement. We want to encourage and support concrete projects for actual practice in civil society, the state, and business as well as raise and activate political awareness. The National Council of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV 2001) founded the BBE on June 5, 2002. Meanwhile, the BBE has 190 member organisations representing millions of members.

Citizens' communities: The last development in the area of German volunteering infrastructure worth to mention is the introduction of the administrative concept of citizens' communities (*Bürgerkommune*) at the municipal level. Stronger involvement is expected to reduce political disaffection amongst citizens, promote civic engagement and decrease municipal budgetary problems. The core aim is to promote volunteering and civic involvement in local planning processes. The mission statement of the *Bürgerkommunes* (Bogumil and Holtman, 2010, 388) specifies the following five goals:

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<sup>82</sup> *Enquete-Kommission*

<sup>83</sup> *Bürger für Bürger*

- Acceptance: to increase citizen satisfaction with municipal services and planning;
- Democracy: to increase the participation of citizens in local democracy;
- Solidarity: to strengthen the infrastructure for supporting citizens initiatives;
- Efficiency: to reduce municipal budgetary problems;
- Effectiveness: to improve political outcomes in terms of policy objectives.

In order to realise these goals, municipalities address citizens in three participation roles:

- Client: Citizens evaluate the performance of municipalities;
- Co-producer: Citizens volunteer and play roles in carrying out political decisions;
- Customer: Citizens participate in policy development and planning.

The introduction of such a *Bürgerkommune* required a fundamental redesign of the municipal decision system (Bogumil and Holtman, 2010, 390) and preconditions for infrastructure to support citizen initiatives.

Italy has a coherent and nation covering network of 5 inter-provincial, 64 provincial and 8 regional volunteer centres with 415 local front offices that support NPOs (Macchioni, 2007, 5). By passing the Law on Volunteering in 1991, the Italian national government provided a solid legal foundation for the volunteering sector and enabled the development of a volunteering infrastructure that differs from the other seven cases addressed in this study in terms of funding and geographical structure (Section 5.2.5). This legislation consists of a framework that is interpreted and implemented by regional councils within their respective territories. This framework focuses on the work of NPOs, but it makes no provisions for individual volunteers. For this reason, volunteer centres in Italy do not consider brokerage as their core business, unlike their counterparts in the other cases. The Law on Volunteering recognises and encourages volunteering because of its contribution to building and improving civil society and it regulates the relationship between the government and voluntary organisations (Hal and colleagues, 2004, 134; Spes, 2006, 251).

A number of legal and administrative regulations apply to volunteering, including the Framework Law 266/91, which has great significance for volunteering infrastructure in Italy. According to Degli Esposito (2009), this Framework 'recognises the social value and functions of volunteering as an expression of participation, solidarity and pluralism'. It also cultivates the development of volunteering and protects its autonomy, while encouraging its capacity to contribute to the achievement of social, cultural and civil aims.

In practice, the legislation focuses on the 21 geographical regions. Ten years after the Framework was enacted, volunteer centres were operating in 16 of these regions. Financial support for the regional volunteer centres is provided by Special Funds in each of the regions, which are supported by 'foundations of banking origin' (Rapizza, 2006, 15), and each region manages its own Special Fund through a controlling body consisting of members appointed by the regional government. This management committee also decides how many volunteer centres can be established within the region (Palma and Paganin, 2002, 65). Between 2001 and 2009, the number of regional volunteer centres increased from 51 to 77, and the number of local volunteer centres increased from 218 to 415. The total budget for these facilities increases from EUR 20 million to EUR 102 million.

Although the national government in the Netherlands decentralised the responsibility for the implementation of social policies (including volunteering policies) to the local level in

1986, it is still a leader in the development of policies concerning volunteering and volunteering infrastructure. Since the 1980s, the national government has supported different perspectives on volunteering, emphasised the meaning of local volunteering infrastructure for the implementation of these perspectives and provided municipalities with policy frameworks for the local implementation of these perspectives. To encourage municipalities to apply these frameworks, the national government regularly provides them with temporary stimulation programmes for establishing and strengthening volunteering infrastructure.

In 1972, the Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work conducted a scientifically guided experiment involving local volunteer centres in the cities of Arnhem and Tilburg. These experiments ultimately lasted for five years (Bos, 2006, 7). In 1977, the Ministry deemed the experiment a success and adopted a measure to cover 50% of the operating costs to each Dutch municipality that established a volunteer centre. By 1986, when the national government transferred responsibility for local social policies to the municipal level and discontinued this stimulation programme, more than 50 municipalities had volunteer centres.

From 1980 until 1982, an Interdepartmental Committee of the Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work published three sub-reports on volunteering describing the general historical and societal backgrounds, impediments, a survey of current departmental policies and measures, the relationship between volunteers and professionals, and the relationship between paid and unpaid work (CRM, 1980; 1981; 1982). In 1985, the new Ministry of Welfare, Health and Culture published a policy document entitled *Volunteering in the areas of welfare, health and culture*<sup>84</sup> in which volunteering was characterised as a positive element of society and an expression of societal and cultural involvement. Because volunteers identify and respond to gaps and shortages, the Ministry considered voluntary work important for the development of society (Dam, Govaart and Wiebes, 1998, 21).

For a brief period, the Dutch government designed special legislation regarding unemployed volunteers. In the 1980s, local social service agencies allowed unemployed people to participate in volunteering while maintaining their social benefits. They attributed a number of advantages to volunteering, including access to networks, social participation and opportunities to gain and maintain skills. Labour unions were afraid that this 'unpaid work' would threaten employment, however, and that it would generate unfair competition on the labour market. To address the concerns of the labour unions, the government enacted legislation concerning 'unpaid work for social security recipients'<sup>85</sup> in 1988. Under this legislation, special committees consisting of representatives of employers, employees and volunteer centres determined the border between volunteer and paid work, and they determined which activities unemployed people are allowed to perform while retaining their social benefits. The legislation was discontinued in 1993, as employment had increased (Bos, 2006, 9).

In the context of governmental policies on social renewal,<sup>86</sup> the Ministry of Welfare, Health and Culture issued a new volunteering policy in 1991 entitled *Invaluable Work*<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> *Vrijwilligerswerk op de terreinen van Welzijn, Volksgezondheid en Cultuur. Ministerie van VWS, 1985*

<sup>85</sup> *Wet Onbeloonde Arbeid Uitkeringsgerechtigden (WOAU)*

<sup>86</sup> *Sociale Vernieuwing*

(WVC, 1991). This policy expressed a new vision on volunteering, which held that the intrinsic value of volunteering to the individual volunteer was just as important as the value of the services that volunteers provide to their organisations. This policy considers volunteering as a means of social participation and an expression of civic engagement.

In the 1990s, the collapse of the former Eastern Bloc undermined confidence in the state as the guiding centre of society. In some Western European countries the gap between government and citizens increases. Continuing economic crisis and unemployment reduced enthusiasm for the market. The on-going process of individualisation affected the meaning of traditional relationships e.g. family, neighbourhood and religion (Dekker, 1994). In this context, the concept of *civil society* – the sum of voluntary associations outside the state, market and private sphere (Buijs, Dekker and Hooghe, 2009) – began to gain significance. At the request of Hedy d’Ancona, Minister for Welfare, Health and Culture in 1992, the Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP) began examining the meaning of volunteering for a civil society. This initiative is consistent with the development of volunteering policies by the same Ministry in 1970 (CRM, 1975b). Between 1994 and 2009 the SCP published five studies on this topic (Dekker, 1994; Deth and Leijenaar, 1994; Dekker, 1999; Hart, 2005; Dekker and Hart, 2009). In 1996, the Cabinet established an independent Council for Social Development<sup>88</sup>, which had the task of advising the government on policy issues concerning civic participation and social stability. This council (RMO, 2008, 76) elaborated studies on such topics as the social activation of long-term unemployed people through volunteering (1997), volunteering and civic involvement amongst ethnic minorities (1997-1998), ‘attractive civic involvement’ (2000), infrastructures to enable civic involvement (2000) and ‘paid work, volunteer effort and informal help’ (2008). The studies published by SCP and RMO affirm the societal value of volunteering and they influence governmental policies regarding civic engagement, including the Framework for Local Social Policy<sup>89</sup> (Ministerie van VWS, 1998) and the Social Support Act (WMO, 2009), which was enacted in 2007.

The Framework for Local Social Policy invokes volunteering with the aim to strengthen communities by emphasising solidarity and active citizenship, safe and liveable communities, social inclusiveness, integration of persons at risk and social cohesion. This framework provides citizens with a central place in the policies of governments and institutions (i.e. as customers, co-designers and performers), and it encourages them to remain active and responsible for their own environment (Ministerie van VWS, 1998, 12).

As a prelude to the International Year of Volunteers 2001 in 2000, two Members of Parliament proposed a motion that stimulated the reinforcement of local volunteering. The State Secretary of Welfare, Health and Sports announced the Temporary Stimulation Programme for Volunteering 2001-2004<sup>90</sup>. Of the 493 municipalities in the Netherlands, 393 made use of this programme, which allowed the establishment of new volunteer centres and the expansion of existing volunteer centres (Bos, 2006, 11).

The Social Support Act, which went into effect in 2007, represents a shift of responsibilities regarding care, welfare and housing from the government to citizens. The primary

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<sup>87</sup> *Onbetaalbaar Werk*

<sup>88</sup> *Raad voor Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling (RMO)*

<sup>89</sup> *Beleidskader Lokaal Sociaal Beleid*

<sup>90</sup> *Tijdelijke Stimuleringsmaatregel Vrijwilligerswerk (TSV)*

precept of this Act is that citizens are expected to look after themselves and each other, and the government ensures that citizens have the necessary preconditions. To promote civic engagement, informal care, liveable communities, volunteering, social participation and active citizenship (all of which are keywords in the text of the legislation), the Act expects municipalities to enact special measures. In the memorandum entitled *Basic Functions: Local support for volunteering and informal care*<sup>91</sup> (Ministerie van VWS, 2009), the national government provided municipalities with a guide for building a supporting local infrastructure for volunteering and informal care, and it offered them consultation services regarding the implementation of these basic functions.

In 1988, the Norwegian government launched its first White Paper on the role of the voluntary sector in Norway (NOU, 1988, 17). Consistent with the welfare perspective, the government presented a positive analysis of the voluntary sector's welfare functions, although it did not fully explain how its positive attitude could be translated into concrete policy. In 1990, the Minister of Health and Social Affairs held a hearing in which representatives of voluntary welfare associations were invited to come up with innovative ideas. Following the example of United States, the Red Cross suggested establishing volunteer centres. This suggestion was well-received (Section 4.3). In general, volunteer centres are charged with gathering experiences on the best ways of mobilising volunteers. They are not intended to become involved in the ordinary activities of voluntary associations or to replace existing public units; instead, they serve as agencies and meeting points to which volunteers, associations, local authorities and people in need can turn for help. The activities of volunteer centres are expected to focus on the care sector (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 4)

Ownership is a relevant issue with regard to volunteering infrastructure in Norway. One third of the 350 Norwegian volunteer centres are owned by municipalities, and the other two thirds are equally divided into civilian and private ownership constructions. Based on propositions found in the academic literature that voluntary or civil activities have advantages over those of market, state and kin/family systems (Najam, 2000, 380; Salamon and colleagues, 2003; Hilger, 2005a, 5; Ewijk, 2006), some scholars have argued that civil activities should maintain a distance from public authorities. If they become too closely intertwined, the formal and inflexible solutions of bureaucratic governance could usurp civil empathy and enthusiasm (Wolfenden, 1978). This argument echoes the expressive function of the democratic perspective (Section 1.1.1). According to this line of reasoning, municipal-owned volunteer centres that mobilise volunteers for caring activities transcend the border between the public and civil sectors (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 5).

As mediators between public and civil ownership and between civil enthusiasm and professional responsibilities, volunteer centres function as *hybrid* agencies that provide a type of glue between public, civil and private resources. This characteristic has made them unexpectedly successful in Norway (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 11).

In 1995, the Norwegian Centre for Voluntary Work (FRISAM) was established as a national umbrella association for voluntary activities. One of its services involved the creation of a contact forum (*kontaktforum*) as a network where voluntary organisations can

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<sup>91</sup> *Basisfuncties Lokale ondersteuning vrijwilligerswerk en mantelzorg*

meet and discuss matters of common interest. Surprisingly, the contact forum considered municipal volunteer centres as organs outside the voluntary sector; these centres thus did not have the status of voluntary organisations, a precondition for membership in the contact forum (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 11). In 2008, FRISAM was succeeded by Volunteering Norway (*Frivillighet Norge*), which developed a new platform for the member organisations. This platform re-opened the discussion concerning the role and function of volunteer centres in Norway. The outcome of this discussion was that the member associations tended to see volunteer centres that were owned by municipalities more as competitors than as partners, and that they were unwilling to accept them as members of *Frivillighet Norge* (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 12).

Despite these outcomes, recent figures (2012) obtained from Håkon Lorentzen of the Institute for Social Research in Oslo reveal a steady increase in the number of municipal-owned volunteer centres (MC). 'A success for MC's seems to rest upon the fact that individualisation sets volunteering free from voluntary associations: I can give my unpaid time to any organisation – civil, public or commercial – that provides activities which are meaningful to me. As long as the MC provides some activity I'd like to join, I would not care much about who the owners are. [...] In this perspective, MC's are, at times, perceived as value-free centre-owners and, consequently, a more attractive partner for local associations and initiatives than those owned by religious or other value based associations'.<sup>92</sup>

When volunteer centres were first proposed in 1991, they were expected to develop deep roots in their local environments without strong directives from the public administration. In 2007, however, the government published a white paper (St.meld nr. 39, 2006-2007) emphasising the hybrid character of volunteer centres and attributing to them a specific role and function as sector-transcending *community centres* (Section 5.3.8). In this role, volunteer centres are expected to generate motivation for volunteer involvement and interaction between voluntary and public activities. In other words, they are to act as a hinge between the civil and public spheres.

During the Johnson Administration (1970s) in the United States, the 'Great Society' programme was developed. This programme includes the empowerment of citizens to shape the society of which they are part. The Great Society attributes a massive role to NPOs in the delivery of its new federally funded social service programmes, and it supports the virtues of voluntary action (Salamon, 1996, 8). The concept of an 'enabling state' was developed under the Reagan and Bush administrations. In 1989, President Bush created a three-part strategy to make community service a national policy of the highest priority. In his speeches, he used the phrase 'a thousand points of light' to emphasise the need for action. The Daily Points of Light Award was established in response to this call to action, and the Points of Light Foundation (POLF) was created in 1990 as an independent and non-partisan NPO, with the goal of encouraging and empowering the spirit of service (Govaart and colleagues, 2001, 223; POLF, 2005, 6). In 1991, the Volunteer Center National Network merged with POLF, along with its 500 volunteer centres.

During the Clinton administration (Section 1.2.2), Vice President Gore acquired internationally recognition and support with the study entitled *Reinventing Government* (Os-

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<sup>92</sup> Håkon Lorentzen, Institute for Social Research, Oslo, interviewed November 28, 2012

borne and Gaebler, 1992; Drucker, 1995). This study returns to the original meaning of the word *government*, which is derived from the Latin *gubernare*, which means 'to steer'. The state should therefore leave 'the rowing' to societal and market actors. The primary role of the state should be to mobilise other actors (e.g. through civic engagement) to perform tasks. The state should take responsibility for financing a service only when no market solution is feasible or when it is necessary to prevent societal actors from biasing the provision of services (Hilger, 2005b, 3).

According to Jeff L. Brudney, the Albert A. Levin Chair of Urban Studies and Public Service at Cleveland State University's Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs:<sup>93</sup>

In the United States, promotion and support of volunteering is widespread, but not very systematic. For the past 50 years, United States presidents have used the Office of President to promote volunteering, through rhetorical support and by creating new programs, such as Peace Corps, Americorps and Freedom Corps. President Obama is a strong supporter of volunteerism, and works for legislation that will greatly expand the size of Americorps. At the state and local levels, government support and promotion of volunteerism vary greatly. Only a few states, most notably California, has a Cabinet level official responsible for volunteerism. Localities in the United States vary even more than states in support and promotion of volunteerism. Especially the nonprofit and the business sectors do provide support for volunteerism, but again the support varies a lot by location.

#### **4.7.2 *Supra-national prospects***

Held (2010) provides an overview of European governmental policy measures with regard to volunteering, including the decision to declare the European Year of Volunteering 2011 (Held, 2010, 423). The *Manifesto for Volunteering in Europe*, which was devised and promoted by the network of 38 volunteer development agencies and volunteer centres comprising the European Volunteer Centre (CEV, 2006), affirms the claim that voluntary action is an important component of the strategic objective of the European Union to become the most competitive dynamic and knowledge-based economy in the world.

The 2009 General Assembly Conference of the European Volunteer Centre (October 14-16, 2009 in Malmö, Sweden) involved member agencies that provide volunteering infrastructure in 27 European countries and addressed the topic of 'An enabling volunteering infrastructure in Europe'. During this conference, participants discussed the panorama of the volunteering infrastructure in different countries in Europe, exchanged information about good practices in the development of effective volunteering infrastructure and worked towards a common understanding of what a volunteering infrastructure is and what its different elements are. The CEV planned to distribute the proceedings of the conference in a printed publication on enabling volunteering infrastructure in Europe and the 'Malmö Agenda', anticipating on the European Year of Volunteering 2011.

The Nonprofit Sector Project of the Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies (2010) at Johns Hopkins University (CCSS/JHU) is collaborating with the International Labour

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<sup>93</sup> Prof. Jeff L. Brudney, Cleveland State University, interviewed January 26, 2010

Organisation (ILO) and a group of technical experts to develop international guidelines (Textbox 24) 'for generating regular and reliable statistics on volunteering which will be comparable across countries and regions'. Reliable statistics will provide a factual base to support statements concerning the extent, value and impact of volunteering. The argument of ILO to create a system that measures volunteer work rests on six major pillars (ILO, 2008, 3-6):

- Volunteer work is sizable and creates significant economic value;
- A growing number of international organisations have come to recognise the contribution and importance of volunteer work;
- Volunteer work is of a special importance to the labour force statistical community
- Despite the contributions that volunteer work makes both to the volunteers themselves and to the beneficiaries of their generosity, little sustained effort has gone into the measurement of the scope, the scale, or distribution of such work, and this impedes policy-making and our general understanding of labour dynamics;
- Not only do existing data systems fail to capture volunteer work, but also, to the extent that these data systems treat volunteer work, they do so inconsistently;
- Establishing a system for improving the data available on volunteer work will thus serve a variety of useful purposes.

Textbox 24: Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work (Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies (2010)

*Volunteer work is a crucial renewable resource for social and environmental problem-solving the world over. Despite the contributions that volunteer work makes both to the volunteers themselves and to the beneficiaries of their generosity, however, little sustained effort has gone into the measurement of the scope, scale, or distribution of such work. What efforts have been made to measure volunteer work have been sporadic and frequently uncoordinated, leaving us without up-to-date, reliable data on the scope of this important social and economic phenomenon. With these facts in mind, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution in 2001 calling on member governments to 'enhance the knowledge base' on volunteering and to support efforts to 'measure' its contributions. The Secretary General reiterated this call in his July 18, 2005 report to the General Assembly on the Follow-Up to the International Year of the Volunteers.*

*In April 2007, ILO and the CCSS/JHU entered into a Memorandum of Understanding under which ILO authorized CCSS/JHU to produce a draft of an ILO Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work through official labour force surveys and a draft Volunteer Measurement Survey Module. Both documents won a solid vote of confidence at the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in Geneva, Switzerland November 24 to December 5, 2008. Close to a hundred participants took part in the Working Group formed to consider this Manual.*

*The proposed ILO Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work will make available a standardized mechanism for generating the comparative data needed to comply with this mandate through a regular supplement to existing labour force surveys. If adopted by the ICLS and implemented in countries, this will revolutionize the information available about the work of volunteers and help boost the visibility and credibility of volunteer work throughout the world. It will also make it possible to measure the impact that nonprofit organizations are having in boosting the levels of volunteer action and to track changes in volunteer effort over time.*

The *International Year of Volunteers 2001*, which was proclaimed by the United Nations with the support of 123 countries, was one of the most successful international years in recent times. One of the key areas of government support during that Year involved facilitating the development of volunteer centres at the national and local levels (Davis Smith, 2003, 25; UNV, 2011a, 12).



## 4.8 Conclusions

This research shows that interest in volunteering is increasing in all eight of the cases. A general concern about potential problems in the field of volunteering (e.g. a shortage of volunteers) has prompted governments and the voluntary sector to develop a variety of interventions, including the establishment of volunteer centres. Volunteering is of interest at the supranational level as well.

This research has demonstrated that volunteer centres have clearly been realised (particularly at the local level) in each of the eight cases examined. They are the most common agencies to provide volunteering infrastructure at the local level. Nevertheless, the position of volunteer centres is neither undisputed nor secure in any of the eight cases. Volunteer centres in England (and to some extent also in the Netherlands, Norway and Germany) are in danger of marginalisation. In many of the cases, the public financiers or actors within the voluntary sector hold no strong views regarding the functions of volunteering infrastructure; they neither support nor subscribe to the template for a volunteering infrastructure, or they do not distinguish volunteer centres from other infrastructure providers. Chapter 5 explores the extent to which the functions that are actually provided by volunteer centres in the eight cases correspond to the template of a volunteering infrastructure (Section 4.5.3).



## 5 FUNCTIONS THAT THE VOLUNTEERING INFRASTRUCTURE ACTUALLY PROVIDES

Based on research in eight cases, Section 4.5 provided insight into functions that volunteer centres aspire to provide, as well as the levels at which they wish to provide them. In Table 11 these aspirations have been converted into a template for a volunteering infrastructure. On several occasions during this research, the template has been discussed with representatives of the volunteering infrastructure in the different cases (Section 2.3.2.4) and acquired their agreement and approval. Section 5.1 determines the extent to which providers of volunteering infrastructure in the eight cases of this study actually meet the outlined template, by comparing the functions they provide with this template. Section 5.2 offers a number of explanations for the differences identified in this comparison. Section 5.3 presents the conclusions.

### 5.1 Comparison between the template for a volunteering infrastructure and the functions volunteer centres actually provide

The findings of the *Invitational Conference on Volunteering Infrastructure & Civil Society 2008* are based on only a few global national surveys (as discussed in Chapter 4), in addition to the outcomes of discussions at national and international scientific and vocational conferences (Section 2.3.2.3). Nonetheless, they clearly indicate that not all of the six functions are performed in each of the eight cases that have been investigated. Table 16 shows the functions that are actually provided by volunteer centres in these cases.

Table 16: Actual provided functions of local volunteer centres

Country	Function					
	Brokerage	Marketing	Good practice development	Developing opportunities	Policy response and campaigning	Strategic development
Denmark	X	X		X	X	
England	X	X	X	X	X	X
Finland	X					
Germany	X	X	X	X	X	X
Italy		X	X	X		X
Netherlands	X	X	X	X	X	X
Norway	X		X		X	
United States	X	X	X			X

## 5.2 Explaining the differences

This section provides four explanations for why the volunteering infrastructure in each of the eight cases does not perform all six of the identified functions. The first explanation (Section 5.2.1) is fundamental: even if sufficient funding is available, it is not always necessary to fill all of the boxes in shown in Table 17. The second (Section 5.2.2) and third (Section 5.2.3) explanations are related. On the one hand, proper funding for volunteering infrastructure is often lacking at the local level. On the other hand, it is generally acknowledged that the local volunteering field needs the support of a durable and professional infrastructure. The fourth explanation (Section 5.2.4) involves situations in which actors within the volunteering infrastructure do not feel that the conditions under which they must operate are insufficient for fulfilling their functions properly.

### 5.2.1 Not all functions are desired at each level of support

The first explanation is that not all of the six functions (Section 4.5) are desired at each level of support (or at least not to the same extent). The two dominant functions for each level of support are shown in Table 17.

Table 17: Dominant functions for each level of support

Function	Level of support		
	Volunteer support	Management support	Community support
Brokerage	X	X	
Marketing	X	X	
Good practice development		X	X
Developing opportunities	X		X
Policy response & campaigning			X
Strategic development	X		X

*Brokerage* and *marketing* are prominent functions in both volunteer support and management support. Brokerage is an instrument that can provide prospective volunteers with information about volunteering opportunities and support during the referral process. For organisations, brokerage is a useful means of publicising vacancies and recruiting new volunteers. In order to involve as many people as possible in volunteering, general information about volunteering opportunities should be available, and these opportunities should serve the interests of the organisations as well as the enlightened self-interest of the volunteers. Marketing is an instrument that can be used in the context of volunteer support by matching volunteering opportunities to the assets, schedules, careers, motivations, phases of life and life styles of prospective volunteers (Section 3.1.2). In the context of management support, in contrast, marketing is used as an instrument to interest people in volunteering, by conveying a variety of positive messages about the benefits, diverse nature and conditions of volunteering. Both brokerage and marketing play a minor role in the development of community support.

The function of *good practice development* is relevant to both management and community support. With regard to management support, good practice development is an important means of raising the quality of service delivery and retaining current volunteers by ensuring the availability of attractive opportunities and preconditions that meet their

wishes and needs. With regard to community support, good practice development is a valuable means of empowering and supporting initiatives that residents develop within their neighbourhoods, or that members develop within their associations or self-help groups. The sharing and distribution of good practices is a highly beneficial form of support for civic initiatives in communities.

The function of *developing opportunities* can serve two different goals. In the context of volunteer support, this function focuses on the development of opportunities that make volunteering accessible for anyone looking for ways to participate in society, including people with special needs. In the context of management support, this function focuses on the development of opportunities with the goal of attracting the volunteers needed for the delivery of special services.

The function of *policy response and campaigning* is particularly relevant for the provision of community support. This function focuses on the creation of preconditions that make people feel invited to express their involvement with their communities, and to make them feel appreciated when they do so. This function supports active citizenship. In this context, the involvement of people in their communities and the social capital and social cohesion that they develop are more important than the types of activities that they actually perform.

The function of *strategic development of volunteering* stresses the societal importance of volunteerism for the social participation of individuals (volunteer support) and the involvement of citizens in their communities (community support). This function involves monitoring circumstances that can facilitate or inhibit volunteering, and it emphasises the importance of volunteering infrastructure.

As shown in Table 18, not all of the volunteer centres in each of the eight cases provide support on three levels. Even in England, Germany and the Netherlands, where volunteer centres have underscored the importance of all three levels and expressed the ambition to support them, only a few volunteer centres are large enough and have access to sustainable funding and professional equipment necessary to deliver proper support to volunteers, managers of NPOs and the community (Section 5.2.2). Financers ultimately determine their own priorities regarding the level of support.

Table 18: Levels of support provided by volunteer centres

Country	Level of Support		
	Volunteer support	Management support	Community support
Denmark	X		X
England	X	X	X
Finland	X		
Germany	X	X	X
Italy		X	X
Netherlands	X	X	X
Norway	X	X	X
United States	X		

### **5.2.2 Failing support for the concept of volunteering infrastructure**

Stakeholders continue to be unaware of the outlined template for a volunteering infrastructure, and they have little interest in discussing the need for a coherent and durable volunteering infrastructure. Section 3.1.4 distinguished various parties that have interests in volunteering infrastructure. In reality, these stakeholders are less interested in a coherent, durable and professional volunteering infrastructure than they are in the provision (in some cases, temporary) of a specific core function at a specific level of support.

For the purposes of this study, the template for a volunteering infrastructure has been discussed at the *Invitational Conference on Volunteering Infrastructure & Civil Society*, as well as with workers in the volunteering infrastructure on several other occasions (Sections 2.3.2.3 and 2.3.2.4). The discussion partners observed that the concept of a volunteering infrastructure (including its coherent functions and levels of support, as well as its implications for the realisation of civil society) has yet to be thoroughly described. Those who were working in the local volunteering infrastructure acknowledged the forces that influence the operations and continuity of their organisations, although they lacked a clear understanding of these forces. In their daily work, most are much more involved with raising money (see Table 19) than they are with reflecting on their work. Because of this, they lack insight into the concept of volunteering infrastructure, and they are not equipped to prioritise the promotion of a coherent and durable infrastructure and the reinforcement of their own vocation (see also the observations of Macmillan and Howlett at the end of Section 5.2.4).

### **5.2.3 Dependence on local funding**

Most of the work of volunteer centres involves carrying out local volunteering policies. For this reason, volunteer centres are largely dependent on local funding as a source of structural financial resources. This appears to be an important reason for the limited means that volunteer centres have available for performing their functions (Table 19). The scale of individual municipalities is often too small to meet the in Section 5.2.4 presented 'English standard' for a fully equipped volunteer centre that performs six functions at three levels of support. Rochester and colleagues (2007) report that 'research with volunteer centres showed areas where the end of funding meant posts were being lost, and general agreement that many centres were not able to deliver the six functions, and in many services were limited to brokerage' (Rochester and colleagues, 2007). In order to guarantee the continuity of their functions, many volunteer centres perform a wide variety of volunteering projects in order to tap into additional sources of funding (Osborne, 1999b, 72; Ebert and colleagues, 2002; Janning and StremLOW, 2006). The national governments of England and the Netherlands stimulate and support municipalities with temporary measures to establish volunteer centres. It is particularly difficult for small municipalities to maintain volunteer centres on their own after national support is discontinued (Davis Smith, 1998, 14; Bos, 2006, 13).

Table 19: Main funding sources of local volunteer centres

Country	Funding					
	National government	Regional government	Local government	NPOs	Charities	Companies
Denmark	X (s*)		X (s*)		X	
England			X (s*)	X	X	
Finland			X (s*)	X	X	
Germany		X	X (s*)	X	X	X
Italy						X
Netherlands			X (s*)		X	X
Norway	X (s*)		X (s*)			
United States		X		X (s*)	X	X

(s\*): Structural financial resource. The other resources mentioned were temporary or project-based financing.

The funding structure of Italian volunteer centres makes them a notable exception. The Savings Bank Foundations earmark one fifteenth of their capital for the financing of volunteer centres (Palma and Paganin, 2002; Degli Esposti, 2009). In the 1990s, most public banks in Italy were a hybrid of commercial and nonprofit activities. Legislation passed in 1990 allowed banks to change their legal status. As Barbetta explains, 'Foundations (and associations) are allowed to create joint stock companies for the actual bank operations, whereas the foundations keep control of the majority of the new bank shares. Dividends paid by the bank therefore represent the income of the philanthropic foundation. These new Savings Bank Foundations or 'Special Funds', may be active in scientific research, education, preservation of cultural heritage, or health' (Barbetta, 1993, 12). Macchioni (2007) reports that the total amount of support available to volunteer centres each year increased drastically from EUR 9 million in 1991 to EUR 108 million in 2007.

Volunteer centres are present in all twenty regions of Italy, with the exception of the autonomous Province of Bolzano. Italy's coherent network of volunteer centres includes five inter-provincial volunteer centres, as well as 64 provincial and eight regional volunteer centres, with 415 local front offices to support organisations that involve volunteers (Macchioni, 2007; Degli Esposti, 2009). In 2007, the Italian volunteering infrastructure employed more than 3,500 people in full-time and part-time positions. These characteristics suggest that, of the eight cases that have been investigated, the volunteering infrastructure of Italy is the closest to the outlined template of a volunteering infrastructure.

On the other hand, the number of Italian banks varies significantly by region. The total sum available for volunteer centres is not distributed proportionally throughout the country (Paganin, 2001). Compared with South Italy, Northern Italy has many more banks that are able to fund volunteer centres through special funds. Because each Savings Bank Foundation is associated with a specific territory, there are inequalities in the amount of money available for volunteer centres in Northern and Southern Italy. To overcome this imbalance, a National Liaison Committee of volunteer centres has started to study solutions. Moreover, dependence on banks is not without risks, as the current (2009 - to date 2013) economic recession shows.

#### **5.2.4 Poor preconditions**

Volunteer centres cite poor preconditions as the primary explanation for the differences between the template and their actual performance. From a vocational point of view, those who work in the area of volunteering infrastructure generally agree that the provi-

sion of the six coherent functions on different levels of support is a precondition for the appropriate promotion and support of local volunteering. Nevertheless, the financiers of volunteering infrastructure do not necessarily share this vocational point of view. In many cases, they provide means for only a limited number of functions (e.g. brokerage and marketing in contexts in which the welfare perspective is dominant). Volunteer centre personnel are likely to have to expend extra effort to pursue their vocational ideal under these circumstances.

In addition, the geographical scale of many local volunteer centres is so small that the available financial and professional means do not allow the proper performance of both the aspired and assigned functions. As discussed in Section 4.6, the incorporation of common goals and operational standards and the monitoring of volunteer centres' performances are still in the very early stages of development.

Local volunteer centres (*Invitational Conference on Volunteering Infrastructure & Civil Society*) consider the organisational equipment in their countries insufficient for fulfilling the six functions properly. Understandably, organisations are unlikely to claim that they have sufficient means and resources. Although it is not yet possible to benchmark volunteer centres against each other, I can use several existing facts to examine the sufficiency of the equipment available to volunteer centres. A number of examples are presented in Textbox 25.

Textbox 25: Examples of experienced poor preconditions

*'The Volunteer Bureaux? It's me! Oh, and two volunteers to help with the admin. We should cover the whole of the district, but that is impossible. The reality is that we cover this town only. There is a lot to do and not enough resources to do it. So I have to prioritise. What gets prioritised? Anything that brings in money or affects our external reputation – it's the only way that we can survive'* (Interview with an English Volunteer Centre coordinator; cited in Osborne, 1999b, 72).

*'The composition of the annual budgets of volunteer centres is like a patchwork quilt. Instead of full funding by a single donor, funds are collected from various sources and agencies. In this area, local and national funding and money from the Employment Administration are the most important sources. Individual volunteer centres, however, differ in their opinions about the sufficiency of their financial resources. In general their financial security is not permanently guaranteed; it is a battle that must be fought from year to year. In this respect nearly all volunteer centres are faced with precarious existence and working conditions'* (Ebert and colleagues, 2002, 96).

*'Volunteer centres are poorly resourced. Some volunteer centres have unsuitable premises. Most are open for only part of the working week. Two-fifths have one FTE employee (or less), and another fifth have between one and two FTE-employees. Most rely on volunteers, who in many cases outnumber the staff, to fill the gap. Many are not able to carry out all six core functions. Many are in a state of semi-permanent crisis; some exist under the threat of closure because of uncertainty about funding; and a number have had to close. There are currently nine complete gaps in coverage of unitary authorities; and seventeen, of district councils'* (Volunteering England, 2006, 2).

*'Local Volunteer Development Agencies had done some good work, but the future was uncertain. The report concluded that there "needs to be a long-term government commitment to funding local volunteering infrastructure". There was a really danger of short-termism which raises and then confounds expectations and reduces agency credibility'* (Davis Smith, 1998, 14).



*'In 2005 Germany still has 190 Volunteer centres, although fewer than 100 have existed more than 2-3 year. Then they tend to come and go due to uncertain finances. Some volunteer centres are able to survive only because of the efforts of their volunteer staff' (Janning and StremLOW, 2006).*

Although there is no common benchmark for comparing the performance of volunteering infrastructure in the various cases, Volunteering England has proposed a standard for assessing the equipment of a volunteer centre. Application of this model to several of the cases of this study reveals support for the hypothesis of poor conditions.

In the context of the *Change Up* programme performed by the Volunteering Hub, Volunteering England (2006) drafted a proposal to create a nation-wide network of volunteer centres. The proposed network would cover the entire population of England, deliver all six functions, increase productivity by expanding the range, scale and specificity of their operations, improve the quality of services, enhance cost-effectiveness and increase the adaptability, flexibility and responsiveness of volunteer centres. In order to achieve this goal, Volunteering England proposed a model ('The English Standard') for a fully equipped volunteer centre. The realisation of this model called for decreasing the number of volunteer centres from 320 to 148, while expanding the scale of the remaining volunteer centres to include all six functions. The proposal further called for the accreditation and branding of all volunteer centres according to the expanded standards, thus increasing their ability to connect to and support projects at the regional and national levels (Volunteering England, 2006, 3).

The proposed model would require an estimated budget of between €147,000 and €220,000 for each volunteer centre (Volunteering England, 2006, 5). In 2006, the volunteer centres in inner-city areas (comprising only 8% of all volunteer centres) were the only ones to have access to budgets of this size. The average budgets of volunteer centres in other areas were between one half and one third of this amount (Gilbert, Nixon and Gibbons, 2006, 3).

In Denmark, a municipal reform in 2007 reduced the number of local municipalities from 275 to 99. One side effect of this reform was that a consolidation of resources in fewer but larger volunteer centres and a more even distribution of these volunteer centres throughout the country: one volunteer centre in every two municipalities (Henriksen, 2008). Even these centres, however, fail to meet the 'English standard' described above. These data reflect a situation that can be observed in most of the eight cases of this study, and they demonstrate clearly that the budget of the average volunteer centre is not sufficient to fulfil all of the six functions properly.

In the United States, more than half of all volunteer centres had budgets of €77,000 or less in 2004 (Brudney, 2005b, 10), and almost all of them had few paid staff members. In many cases, the Executive Director was the only paid employee (Brudney, 2005b, 16). In Germany, only about one in five volunteer centres had budgets of more than €100,000 in 2001 (Ebert and colleagues, 2002, 52). A survey conducted in the Netherlands in 2006 (Stubbe and van Dijk, 2006, 6) revealed that 65% of all volunteer centres had very small paid staffs (only one or two paid employees, in many cases only part-time).

According to Brudney expense budgets and professional staff influence the functions American volunteer centres provide:

The *2001 Volunteer Center Survey* (United States) shows a relationship between the budgets of volunteer centres and their performance. According to this report, the 'average number of volunteer opportunities extended by Volunteer Centers steadily increases with the size of the expense budget' (Brudney, 2005a, 98).

The report states further that:

Centers with larger expense budgets are better able to keep their directors in place and to reap the resulting benefits. [...] Volunteer Centers with greater expense budgets can offer their directors more attractive positions [...] and retain [them as] director over a longer period and realise the advantages that greater tenure and more stable leadership can bring (Brudney, 2005a, 90-91).

Brudney (2005a, 90) further observes that the delivery of functions of volunteer centres is affected by the leadership and tenure of their directors. Consistent with this observation, volunteer centres in the Netherlands have found that the proper implementation of the functions depends on the educational level of the professional staff and the amount of staff time that is available (Table 15). Few data are available regarding the competences and type of education which are required for each of the functions and whether volunteer centres have the professional equipment and resources they need to perform these tasks properly. Further research is needed in this area.

Research on the development, effectiveness and sustainability of local infrastructure organisations (including volunteer centres) in England (Macmillan, 2007, i) reveals several characteristics of successful local infrastructure organisations and the conditions required to replicate them. The conclusion that the role of the Chief Officer is the most significant factor underscores the conclusions mentioned above (albeit from a different angle). The key findings of this study are summarised in Textbox 26.

Textbox 26: Ten key findings on local voluntary and community sector infrastructure (Macmillan, 2007, i)

- *There appears no single model of development of local VCS<sup>94</sup> infrastructure;*
- *Staff-related factors are the most important in establishing local infrastructure organisations;*
- *Initial support – both financial and otherwise – varies considerably;*
- *Local infrastructure organisations developed in an enabling context are more confident in their effectiveness than are those developed in a challenging context;*
- *The calibre, character and approach of Chief Officers are the most decisive factors in the success of local infrastructure organisations;*
- *The future of local VCS infrastructure is uncertain;*
- *The extent of local statutory funding appears to be a decisive factor in the financial stability of local infrastructure organisations;*
- *Local infrastructure organisations rely heavily on national funding programmes to provide a sense of financial stability in the near future;*
- *Local infrastructure organisations tend to see rationalisation more as a threat than as a solution or opportunity;*
- *Assessments concerning the performance, character and approach taken by the Chief Officers of local infrastructure organisations have a significant impact on the confidence of external stakeholders in these organisations.*

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<sup>94</sup> VCS: Voluntary and Community Sector

This study has revealed additional evidence regarding the impact of professional staff on the performance of volunteer centres. Section 4.4 indicates which of the six functions are performed by volunteer centres in each of the cases that have been investigated (and for some of the cases, the extent to which they are performed). According to Howlett (2008, 11), while brokerage may seem to be the central function of volunteer centres, the other five functions are related to the success of the brokerage function. Little serious research has examined the amount of time that volunteer-centre staff members spend on brokerage or the relative effectiveness of brokerage in helping organisations to increase the number of volunteering opportunities they offer (as opposed to placing individuals in existing opportunities). The availability of data concerning the amount of time that volunteer centre staff members spend on each of the functions is scarce, as is evidence concerning the extent to which their work focuses on brokering for individuals, providing advice for organisations or realising attractive preconditions for volunteering in general.

In the cases that support the service function of volunteering, brokerage is clearly seen as the primary task of a volunteer centre (Howlett, 2008, 12). Nonetheless, the increasing application by volunteer centres of local or national volunteer databases for brokerage raises questions regarding the extent to which brokerage will remain their main core function. In the Netherlands, prospective volunteers are for brokerage services increasingly visiting the virtual instead of the physical volunteer vacancies of volunteer centres. This trend has led to drastic reductions in the amount of time that physical volunteer centres are open (VIA, 2010, 8). This gives volunteer centres the opportunity to invest the time that becomes available from the brokerage function in other activities.

Howlett (2008) provides the following investment advice:

There is a role for centres to help organisations develop new ways of presenting opportunities – out of office hours, short-term tasks, more flexible and rewarding tasks for example, could help recruit more volunteers. And yet, volunteer centres are often unable to do this role, it takes staff time that many simply do not have. Furthermore, volunteer centres are wary of pursuing some functions if the knock on effect will cause problems. A common example of this is that work to market volunteering will result in more volunteer enquiries which is good, but then the centre will not have the staff to deal with them, or indeed the opportunities may not be available if the centre has not been working with local organisations in developing more attractive and well supported volunteer roles (Howlett, 2008, 12).

Referring to the fourth of the ten key-findings on local voluntary and community sector infrastructure (Textbox 25), Macmillan affirms Howlett's observation:

LIOs<sup>95</sup> as a whole appear to be slightly more confident in terms of their work in: 'facilitating effective communication and networking'; 'assisting local organisations' and 'enabling representation', but slightly less confident in: 'identifying needs' and 'enhancing the sector's role' (Macmillan, 2007, i).

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<sup>95</sup> Local Infrastructure Organisation

### 5.3 Conclusions

This chapter compares the functions that are actually provided by volunteer centres in eight countries to the template for a volunteering infrastructure. This comparison reveals that, in practice, few volunteer centres meet the outlined template. Four possible explanations are proposed for the identified deviations from the template. These explanations are derived largely from practical explanations in the various countries. In order to supplement these explanations, Chapter 6 explores whether and to what extent the various arguments for the promotion of volunteering expressed in the eight cases (Section 4.2) affect the deviations from the template.

## 6 THE IMPACT OF FOUR PERSPECTIVES ON VOLUNTEERING

This chapter returns to the motives for promoting volunteering (Section 4.2), which sparked the establishment of volunteer centres in the countries addressed in this research. It has been noted that the initial objectives that each country had for establishing such infrastructure have gradually been extended to include new objectives. The analysis performed in this study identifies four distinct objectives. Scientific evidence has been found for each of these objectives.

In his address on the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Berlin Volunteer Centre (*Treffpunkt Hilfbereitschaft*), on July 1, 1998, Professor Heiner Keupp (1998, 97) did not abandon his initial scepticism against the promotion of volunteering as mere whitewash for governmental economic measures, although he did emphasise the community aspect of volunteering, focusing on the many activities citizens may develop within a individualising society. He designed a vision of civil society with active citizens and civil involvement at the core. Against the background of the communitarian discussion (Etzioni 2005 [1996], Section 6.5.1), he stated that civic engagement has become a serious theme and that he no longer saw a reason to complain about increasing egoism. Keupp was fascinated by the development of the civil-society perspective, because of the way in which the concept of civic involvement clusters four current societal issues or discourses (Keupp, 1998, 98; Textbox 27).

Textbox 27: Four discourses on civic involvement (Keupp, 1998, 98)

- *The welfare discourse: the concern about the survival of the community and social capital within an individualising society;*
- *The democracy discourse: the discovery of civil society and its meaning for the building of democracy;*
- *The social security discourse: the way in which societies protect their citizens against risks and threats without turning them into objects or consumers of care;*
- *The employment discourse: the importance of such social activities as volunteering to the creation of identity, if the labour market cannot provide employment for all people.*

Hilger (2005b; 2006b) detects comparable patterns in the meaning of volunteering for public policies. Across Europe, volunteering is increasingly being considered as a resource for service provision, participation and community integration. Rochester and colleagues (2010, 3) observe that:

[...] volunteering is also seen as a means of delivering a whole range of government policies over and above social inclusion which include sustainable communities, health and social welfare, rural communities, education, criminal justice and anti-social behaviour.

As a consequence of this perception, the field of voluntary activity is often labelled as the civic, nonprofit or third sector. In more and more societies, modern volunteering is becoming less likely to emerge out of duties embedded within specific social milieus with

particular traditions and normal life-courses. Reflexive volunteering (Hustinx and Lam-mertyn, 2003) is characterised by an increased acknowledgement of self-centred motives, closer relations to a personal life-style and identity, combined with the importance of a biographical match in the life course of volunteers. This concept coincides with the increasing emphasis on the significance of civil society (Hilger 2005b, 1; 2006b). In *Four Discourses on Civic Engagement*, Hilger (2005b, 7) elaborates the relevance of civil society within the context of modes of participation and service provision (Textbox 28).

Textbox 28: Hilger's four discourses on civic engagement (Hilger, 2005b,7)

- *The welfare discourse concerns the relation between state and citizen, discusses the role of volunteers in service provision and probably occurs most in the field of social policy.*
- *The democracy discourse stresses the role of civic engagement, volunteering and associations in shaping the political conduct of society. Volunteering is a way to provide input into the political system, as well as to participate in the implementation of decisions (Hilger, 2005b; Merrill, 2006).*
- *The economic discourse is more recent and has a strong focus on the impact of volunteer work and associations on the economy, as well as on the solutions that volunteering can provide to the problem of unemployment and disintegration (Rifkin, 1996).*
- *The community discourse concerns the enhancement of close neighbourhood relations and trust through volunteering and civic engagement. In short, it involves the enhancement of social capital (Merrill, 2006).*

Alcock (2010, 5), defining the third sector in the UK, emphasises the importance of policy discourses in shaping debate and constructing definition, explaining how the terms to describe the voluntary sector broaden to 'voluntary and community sector' and then to 'third sector' (Alcock, 2010, 13). Alcock (2010, 15) refers to three different 'constellations' or 'camps' emerging in the discourse about a third sector in the UK, identified by Kendall (2009, 13; Alcock, Kendall and Parry, 2012, 351):

- Consumerist discourse – largely based on quasi-market service delivery concerns, promoting the sector as an alternative to state and market failure;
- Civil revivalist discourse – with a state-led focus on third sector contributions to civil order, promoting the sector as a response to perceived democratic deficit;
- Democratic renewal discourse – with a community focus on group action and engagement of local citizens, promoting the sector as a vehicle for community empowerment.

To these three 'camps' distinguished by Kendall (which correspond to Hilger's welfare, democratic and community discourses) Hilger added a fourth 'economic camp'.

With their discourses or 'camps' Keupp (1998), Hilger (2005b; 2006b) and Kendall (2009) suggest a relationship between certain societal, political and economic questions or discourses that are present in civil societies and new values and expectations that are attributed to volunteering. The discourses provide a framework for the further examination of these specific expectations. I seek to identify the implications of these expectations for parties interested in volunteering.

This chapter is not intended to provide an in-depth analysis of discourses (Dijk, 1993) on civic engagement. Instead, it introduces a convenient framework for presenting and explaining the various values that are assigned to volunteering from four different perspectives. The framework for this chapter is based on the schema developed by Hilger (2005b, 7; 2006b, 20) in order to express the four discourses (Table 20). It includes the findings of Keupp (1998) and Kendall (2009) and resembles the empirical experiences of

the author of this dissertation with the development of the volunteering infrastructure in the Netherlands. This schema also provides a foundation for his practical experiences.

Table 20: Analysis of Hilger’s four discourses on civic engagement (Hilger, 2005b, 7)

Discourse	Focus	Main fields	Example	Emphasis	Aim	Central motive / mode
<b>Welfare</b>	Services	Social health	Food bank, care work	Provision	Support, well being	<b>Altruism, doing for</b>
<b>Democracy</b>	Participation	Politics	Social movements, NGO’s	Advocacy	Influence, expression	<b>Shared interests</b>
<b>Economy</b>	Economic impact	Economy, labour market	Social enterprise, citizens work	Innovation	Employment	<b>Material benefit</b>
<b>Community</b>	Social integration	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood help	Value, trust, guardian	Creating ties	<b>Proximity, doing with</b>

Using Hilger’s schema, this chapter describes the characteristic values, expectations and roles attributed to volunteering by each of the four perspectives. In a sense, these values, expectations and roles give volunteering in each perspective a unique appearance and meaning – a unique ‘colour’. In order to distinguish the perspectives from each other and to understand the impact that each perspective has on volunteering, the following sections present the four perspectives according a corresponding classification.

## 6.1 Classification frameworks

This section introduces classification frameworks for elaborating the four different perspectives similarly and consistently. The framework has two parts. The first part elaborates for each perspective, the interests that various parties have in volunteering. As interested parties are discerned governments, NPOs, volunteers and third parties. This division partially corresponds to the Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit, developed in 2004 by the Institute for Volunteering Research (Rochester and colleagues. 2010, 167), which distinguishes between the interests of volunteers, organisations, service users and communities. The second part of the framework describes the dominant style of volunteer management for each perspective, as well as the position of paid staff in relation to volunteers and the character of volunteering.

### 6.1.1 The interests of various parties according to the four perspectives

#### 6.1.1.1 The interests of government

This study has explored for eight cases the motives of governments to invest in measures to support the development of volunteering (Section 4.2). Analysis of public policies on volunteering shows that each of the eight cases investigated in this study has its own preferences to stimulate volunteering. These public-policy preferences were used to de-

rive four perspectives on volunteering. To develop a more complete explanation of these preferences, this chapter will link them to Social Origins Theory, as developed by Salamon and Anheier (1998). With regard to the position of NPOs within civil society, they discern four types of nonprofit regimes (Textbox 29). Salamon and Anheier (2009) consider voluntary involvement a main feature of the nonprofit sector

[...] involving some meaningful degree of voluntary participation. This involves two different, but related, considerations: First, the organization must engage volunteers in its operations and management, either on its board or through the use of volunteer staff and voluntary contributions. Second, 'voluntary' also carries the meaning of 'non-compulsory.' Organizations in which membership is required or otherwise stipulated by law are excluded from the nonprofit sector.

In their four types of regimes, Salamon and Anheier (1998) express the extent of the nonprofit sector in terms of employment, without distinguishing between employment as paid or unpaid (volunteer) work. Some years later, Salamon and Sokolowski (2001, 12) and Salamon and colleagues (2003, 17) still distinguished between volunteers and paid nonprofit staff. By linking the four discourses on civic engagement (Hilger, 2005b) with Social Origin Theory, this study aims to clarify the meanings that the respective nonprofit regimes assign to voluntary unpaid work.

Textbox 29: Four ideal types of nonprofit regimes (Salamon and Anheier, 1998, 241)

- **Liberal:** Government spending on social welfare is relatively low, and the size of the nonprofit sector is relatively large. The United States (in pure form) and the United Kingdom (as a mix of liberal and social democratic) fall into this category.
- **Social democratic:** Relatively high levels of government social-welfare spending are accompanied by a relatively small nonprofit sector. This pattern is best represented in Scandinavia, and to a lesser extent in Italy. Because the nonprofit sector may perform a different function (i.e. a predominantly expressive, advocacy role) in social democratic regimes – a small nonprofit sector in terms of employment does not necessarily mean a small nonprofit sector in general. Particularly in Sweden, which ranks low with in terms of paid employment in the nonprofit sector, a very substantial network of volunteer-based advocacy, recreational and hobby organisations exist alongside a highly developed welfare state. Taking the involvement of volunteers into account, Sweden ranks among the highest of all European Countries. In Norway, the years between 1980 and 1990 were characterised by a shift in deeply-rooted social-democratic hostility towards voluntary activities. The new liberalism of Thatcher, Reagan and other world leaders argued the need for a broader spectrum of welfare activities than those provided by state. Second, the mutual dependence between public and civil welfare resources began to be acknowledged. After 50 years of public belief in the all-encompassing responsibilities of the state, the re-introduction of civic responsibility was no easy task.
- **Corporatist:** In this regime, the state has been either forced or induced to find common ground with nonprofit organisations. In Germany, the state forged an agreement with the major churches beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in order to create a state-dominated social welfare system that nevertheless maintained a sizable religious and, hence, nonprofit presence. 'Subsidiarity' is the guiding principle for social policy. Following the French Revolution, France broke the dominance of church-created voluntary institutions and charted a course towards state-sponsored social welfare. In this case, however, political opposition preserved the dominant role of Catholic schools in primary and secondary education. A strong sentiment of solidarity sustained a network of friendly societies and associations through which cultural and recreational interests were pursued. In the early 1980s, severe resistance to the further extension of the classic social-democratic welfare state forced the Socialist government to reach out to the associational world for help, in exchange for financial support.
- **Statist:** This regime is characterised by low levels of government social-welfare spending, accompanied by a relatively small nonprofit sector. Japan offers a good example of this model.



The eight cases that were investigated have different nonprofit regimes. Six of the eight cases included were also included in a study by Salamon and Sokolowski (2001) on volunteering patterns in 24 countries. That study reveals differences amongst countries with regard to the *amount* and *composition* of volunteering. These differences are explained according to Social Origin Theory (Salamon and Anheier 1998), focusing on the service role and the expressive role of volunteering (Salamon and colleagues, 2003, 22; Textbox 1).

The service role is self-explanatory: it simply includes activities that have a use-value to society, such as fulfilling people’s needs, solving social problems, or emergency relief. By contrast, the expressive role denotes activities whose main purpose is the actualization of values or preferences, such as pursuit of artistic expression, preservation of cultural heritage or natural environment, political mobilization and advocacy, or the enhancement of quality of life. The performance of these two key roles by the nonprofit sector depends on social-political conditions. Certain conditions can encourage one role while discouraging the other, or perhaps provide opportunities for both roles to grow. The four regime types outlined by the social origins theory represent social forces that differentially affect the performance of these two roles (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 15).

The relationship between nonprofit regime types and the amount and roles of volunteering according to Salamon and Sokolowski (2001, 15) is presented in Table 21:

Table 21: Relationship between regime types and the amount and roles of volunteering (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 16)

<b>Regime type</b>	<b>Volunteering amount</b>	<b>Dominant volunteering type</b>
Social-democratic	High	Expressive
Liberal	High	Service
Corporatist	Moderate	Service
Statist	Low	Service

6.1.1.2 *The interests of NPOs*

Section 1.1.1 noted that this study uses the term NPO (following Najam, 2000, 376) to refer to ‘that broad spectrum of organisations that variously is referred to as the non-profit, voluntary, independent, charitable, people’s, philanthropic, associational or third sector’. These organisations occupy the social space between the market and the state, and they involve volunteers in their operations in order to provide services and activities. In their International Classification of Nonprofit Organisations, Salamon and colleagues (2003, 10) identify twelve fields of NPO activities (Table 2, Section 1.1.1). They group these fields into two broad general categories: service and expressive functions (Textbox 1, Section 1.1.1). The latter distinction is used in the elaboration of the perspectives. The clients of NPOs who benefit from the services and activities delivered by volunteers are implicitly considered as interested parties as well.

### 6.1.1.3 The interests of volunteers

Individual citizens look for volunteering experiences in which they can realise their 'interest rightly understood' (Tocqueville, 2004, [1835], 643). With regard to the motivations that individuals have for initiating volunteer behaviour, can be distinguish between motives that originate from within (intrinsic) and those that arise from the outside (extrinsic). Karr and Meijs (2006) apply the sociological framing approach of Lindenberg (2006) to explain motivation in the context of volunteering. Lindenberg (2006) distinguishes the 'normative' frame (oriented towards acting appropriately), the 'hedonic' frame (oriented towards feeling better right now), and the 'gain' frame (oriented towards guarding and improving one's resources). While the gain frame is largely determined by extrinsic motives, the hedonic and normative frames are primarily determined by two different aspects of intrinsic motives. Hedonic motives are driven by intrinsic motivation based on pleasure or enjoyment, and normative motives are driven by intrinsic motivation based on a sense of obligation. With regard to extrinsic motives Sundeen and colleagues (2009, 929) mention that volunteers receive numerous benefits from their efforts, including the ability to meet psychological, social, career and leisure needs. Hustinx (2010, 237) argues that volunteering 'becomes a tool for self-actualization or "life(style) politics", embedded in self-authored individualized narratives'. This view is supported by Bennett (1998), Giddens (1990, 1991) and Micheletti (2003). In their functional approach to volunteer motivation, Clary, Snyder, Ridge, Copeland, Stukas, Haugen (1998) describe six functions that volunteering can serve for individual volunteers. Textbox 30 presents these functional categories as elaborated by Musick and Wilson (2008, 57). In this chapter, these categories are used to illustrate the specific interests that volunteers have from within each of the four perspectives.

Textbox 30: Six functional categories of volunteer motivation (based on Snyder, Clary and Stukas, 2000, as elaborated in Musick & Wilson, 2008)

- Values: Individuals have internalised certain values, wish to actualise them and take pleasure in engaging in behaviours (e.g. volunteering) through which they can realise these values;
- Enhancement: Volunteering offers the opportunity to learn about different people, places, skills or one-self;
- Social: Volunteering fulfils the need to fit in and get along with members of groups that are important to us, as well as the need to win the social approval or to meet the expectations of people who are important to us;
- Career: Volunteering offers the opportunity to obtain such career-related benefits as work skills, business contacts, exploration of different career options and improving job prospects;
- Protective: Volunteering enables people to deal with inner conflicts, feelings of incompetence, uncertainties about identity and emotional needs;
- Understanding: Volunteering offers opportunities for personal growth, ego-enhancement, self-assurance and the exploration of one's own strengths.

### 6.1.1.4 The interests of third parties

Schools (service learning, community service), companies (corporate social responsibility), corporations (vital and safe communities), judges (alternative sentencing), therapists (social integration), social workers (social inclusion) service clubs (community service) and other third parties use volunteering as a means to realise specific goals, as mentioned in parentheses. With regard to the involvement of companies 'today roughly one in three large companies offers some type of employer-supported volunteerism. There is a growing trend of long term collaboration between private sector enterprises and NPOs' (UNV, 2011a, xxii).

## **6.1.2 Volunteers and organisations**

For each perspective, is considered the dominant style of volunteer management, the position of paid staff in relation to volunteers and the character of volunteering.

### *6.1.2.1 Volunteer management*

Referring to Weberian sociological theory, Zimmeck (2001, 15) distinguishes between 'modern' and 'home-grown' volunteer management styles. The modern or 'work-place' model is characterised by its application in larger, hierarchical organisations. In contrast to this bureaucratic approach, the home-grown or 'collectivist-democratic' model is less hierarchical and more egalitarian, with few rules and procedures (Rochester and colleagues, 2010, 153).

Meijs and Hoogstad (2001) elaborate on this difference in their definition of programme and membership management. Programme management focuses on the realisation of goals and operational tasks by means of volunteers, is applied especially in *service delivery* organisations dominated by paid staff with (substantial) financial budgets. The focus of programme management is to assign volunteers to tasks. In contrast, membership management focuses on assigning tasks to volunteers. Membership management focuses on the volunteers themselves, aiming to enter new challenges with existing volunteers (who are often members).

For a better understanding of the application of these two management styles, the distinction between voluntary organisations is introduced, based on the goals: service delivery, campaigning and mutual support (Handy, 1988, 12). Service delivery NPOs provide services to clients outside the organisation (e.g. Red Cross, hospitals, Salvation Army). Campaigning organisations propagate a conviction or belief (e.g. Green Peace, political parties, human rights organisations). In mutual support organisations members share a common interest or problem. Solidarity and 'doing things for and with each other' are the driving forces within mutual support organisations (e.g. religious congregations, citizen initiatives, neighbourhood groups, sports clubs, self-help groups, scouting).

Programme management is prevalent in *service delivery organisations*, and it relates to the welfare perspective on volunteering. Membership management is most commonly applied in *mutual support* and *campaigning* organisations, and it relates to the democratic, economic and community perspectives.

The application of these two styles of management differs with regard to structure, culture, process and environment (Meijs and Hoogstad, 2001, 50), and each style makes different demands on volunteer administrators. In programme management, volunteers are seen as instruments – as a means to the realisation of the organisations' goals. In membership management, the activities of an organisation are an expression of the convictions, beliefs, ideals and desires of its members and the activities are expressions of the members' talents (or lack thereof).

### *6.1.2.2 The position of paid staff in relation to volunteers*

Many NPOs employ both paid staff and unpaid volunteers in various combinations. Meijs (1997, 47) distinguishes between volunteer-governed, volunteer-supported and volunteer-run NPOs. Although these types describe the relative positions in which volunteers

and paid staff can operate within organisations, they do not address the question of 'which labour has to be paid, and which not'. Opinions on this issue differ according to national context, sector (e.g. between governmental and nongovernmental organisations) and even across NPOs in similar settings. The following arguments have been discussed with regard to the boundaries between paid and voluntary work:

- *Nonprofit regime and statutory regulations*: Regimes characterised by a high level of social-welfare spending and a small nonprofit sector in the area of service delivery (the social democratic regime) generally do not involve volunteers in the provision of public services. Under these regimes, services that are performed by volunteers in other countries are restricted to paid staff. The degree of guaranteed, professional and state-provided services determines the space available for civic involvement in service delivery (Salamon and colleagues, 2003). Another development that influences the boundaries between paid and voluntary work is the increase of unemployment. Since the 1980s, the ideal of full employment has largely been abandoned. The labour market can no longer accommodate everyone who wants a job. Due to age, disabilities, lack of education or other shortcomings, many people are unemployed and in need of alternative means of participating in society. In many countries in which the primacy of paid work prevails, the laws do not allow people who receive social benefits to volunteer. In other countries, governments incorporate tasks formerly performed by volunteers under the category of 'community work', obliging unemployed people to perform them in exchange for their social benefits. This is an example of a shift from unpaid volunteers to paid employees (Bosselaar, 1994; Rifkin, 1996; Beck 1996, 1999; Martenson, 2005).

- *Ownership*: Members of community-based organisations, citizen initiatives, associations and political and ideological organisations, as well as grassroots<sup>96</sup> (Smith, 2000), neighbourhood and action groups deliver voluntary services for and with for their own people, based on principles of reciprocity. Within this type of organisation, members are willing to offer their skills (in some cases, professional skills) voluntarily and without compensation. Should this type of organisation become dependent on the means of a third party (e.g. the government), or be required to deliver its services and activities to non-members or to comply with externally imposed demands, such loss of ownership concerning their activities can diminish the willingness to continue their contributing their effort in the demanded way (Duyvendak, Laan and Veldboer, 2003; Meijs and Delleman, 2006). According to Dugstad and Lorentzen (2008, 10) the empathy and enthusiasm of civil activities can be usurped by formal and inflexible solutions involving bureaucratic governance if they come to resemble public authorities too closely.

- *Professional paid staff codes*: Some tasks and functions are the exclusive and protected domain of paid staff with well-specified educational criteria, qualifications or certification requirements. These codes differ by country, in such areas as public transport, health-care, fire-fighting, ambulance services and disaster control. Professional paid staff codes are sometimes based on tradition, security considerations, special risks or responsibilities, and they aim to prevent amateurism. In some cases, these codes merely protect the position of paid staff. In perspectives in which employment policies dominate civic par-

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<sup>96</sup> 'Grassroots associations are significantly autonomous formal nonprofit groups that use the associational form or structure, that are volunteer run and composed essentially of volunteers as analytical members, and then have a relatively small scope (i.e. locally based). Hence, they are one important form of nonprofit group' (Smith, 2000, ix).

ticipation, volunteers can be considered a threat to paid employment. Their roles are complementary to those of paid staff. In regimes dominated by civic participation policy, citizens are stimulated to make their professional skills available to NPOs voluntarily and without compensation. In these regimes, the role of paid staff is complementary to that of volunteers, as in the context of corporate social responsibility programmes or programmes that appeal to the competencies of retired people.

- *Financial means*: The need to obtain or save financial means can force NPOs (which are often mutual support organisations) to impose certain tasks on volunteers that require a level of willingness or expertise that these volunteers lack and that usually are performed by paid employees. Examples include the cleaning and maintenance of buildings, book-keeping or training. In other NPOs, particularly associations, members often prefer to donate money instead of time. As a consequence, these organisations can afford – and are forced – to professionalise tasks that are performed by volunteers within other associations (Berg, Dekker and Hart, 2008, 77). While one sporting club may contract out the exploitation of its canteen to a catering company, another may depend on a rotating roster of member-volunteers to provide the needed services.

The boundary between paid and unpaid work is not static but dynamic, and it changes continually in response to the influence of political, social and economic factors. These responses often differ by country. In voluntary organisations that combine volunteers and paid staff, volunteer administrators should have a clear understanding of the boundaries between the specific domains of the volunteer and those of the paid staff. To maintain a constructive cooperation between volunteers and paid staff, a volunteer administrator must constantly negotiate and revise these boundaries.

### 6.1.2.3 *The character of volunteering*

Chapter 3 described the character of volunteering by elaborating on the functions, tasks, positions, context and nature of participation of volunteers. The discussion included several distinctions, including between instrumental and expressive, classic and new, exclusive and inclusive, operational and goal setting, 'business-like' and flexible/episodic volunteering. These descriptions include a specification of the distinctive character of each perspective.

## 6.2 **The welfare perspective**

### 6.2.1 **Introduction**

The welfare perspective on volunteering is concerned with the relationship between the state and NPOs with regard to service provision, focusing on the service function of NPOs rather than on their expressive function (Textbox 1). This chapter elaborates on the role played by volunteers in the delivery of services. This role is probably most advanced in the field of social policy (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992; Ascoli and Cnaan, 1997; Enquete-Kommision, 2002, 493; Salamon and colleagues 2003, 23; Hilger, 2005b, 5; Vogt, 2005, 41; Casey, Dalton, Melville and Onyx, 2010, 59; UNV, 2011a, xxi; Ministry of Social Affairs, 2001; WMO, 2009).

## **6.2.2 The interests of various parties according to the welfare perspective**

### *6.2.2.1 The interests of government*

The extent to which NPOs provide services depends on the nonprofit regime (Table 20) supported by the country in which they are located. The welfare perspective focuses on society-based welfare production and the advantages that individuals and the state can realise through civic engagement in terms of adequacy, effectiveness, reach and lower costs, improved ability to understand target populations, reach, flexibility and responsiveness to local circumstances and special needs (Hilger, 2005b, 5; Ewijk, 2006). At the core of this perspective, however, is the perception that the state should limit its repertoire in the interest of the legitimacy and effectiveness of state action. Beveridge (1948), who is considered the architect of the British welfare state, acknowledges voluntary action as an important element of a democratic society. According to Beveridge, both the state and the individual must together achieve policies of social security. According to this view, voluntary organisations should be 'doing those things which the state should not do' (Beveridge, 1948, 301), as the limit of governmental actions is no longer obvious. The state must give individuals room and encouragement for voluntary action in order to provide more than a minimum of social security and welfare for themselves and their family.

In northern Europe, governmental interference has been decreasing since the 1980s, and the role of NPOs is expanding (Dekker, 1994; Harris and Rochester, 2001; Burger and Dekker, 2001; Hal and colleagues, 2004; Buijs and colleagues 2009; Olk and colleagues 2010). This development has long been a subject of particular interest for the Institute for Policy Studies at Johns Hopkins University, as evident in the research programme entitled *Towards an understanding of the international nonprofit sector*, conducted by Salamon and Anheier (1992) in 46 countries. Salamon describes the changing relationship between governments and NPOs, explains why governments come to rely NPOs for the delivery of public services (Salamon, 1995) and investigates the 'rediscovery of the alternative source' of volunteering (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 1).

Government interest in volunteering has been increasing for a variety of reasons, resulting in such developments as the adoption of national and local infrastructural measures to promote volunteering, which are the central topic of this study. The strengthening of the relation between NPOs and governments has been accompanied by a growing political interest in the concept of civil society, which offers a new framework within which to discuss and review the specific roles and responsibilities of state, market and citizens (Dekker, 1994; 1999; Vogt, 2005; Buijs and colleagues 2009). This view is gaining broad political support. Using the slogan, 'steer, not row', former USA Vice-President Gore (Gore, 1990) promoted in the 1990s 'a kind of empowerment government – a government that set goals, and provides the tools to reach them – that leaves a vital role for communities, churches, civic institutions, families: the kind of vibrant civic life that is the very ideal of self-government'. The concept of 'The Third Way' (Giddens, 1998) between neo-liberalism and the Keynesian welfare state, emphasising the development of civil society with a central role for voluntary action and volunteering, was adopted by the former Prime Minister Blair of the UK and former Chancellor Schröder of Germany (Howlett and Locke, 1999; Muehlebach, 2012, 99). In the UK and several other countries, governments began to make agreements with NPOs about the delivery of public

services by means of 'Compacts' (Home Office, 2005; Casey and colleagues, 2010; Acheson, 2010; Zimmeck, 2010).

With reference to Social Origin Theory (Salamon and Anheier, 1998), the welfare perspective is dominant within liberal regimes, which are characterised by a relatively low level of governmental welfare spending and a relatively large nonprofit sector. The United States was the only one of the eight cases investigated in this study to fall into this category (Salamon and Anheier, 1998, 241). Although to a lesser extent, the welfare perspective is also prominent in the corporatist regime, as exemplified by Germany, Italy, the UK and the Netherlands (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 18). In these countries, the state has been forced or induced to find common ground with NPOs. The state enables NPOs to provide public services, and it encourages volunteers to contribute to the delivery of these services. In social democratic regimes, the level of social welfare spending is relatively high and the nonprofit sector is relatively small. Although this pattern is dominant in Norway, Denmark, Finland (Salamon and colleagues 2001, 263; Salamon and Anheier, 1998, 241), the welfare perspective has recently been drawing more attention in these countries, due to belief in the need to mobilise civil welfare resources (Lorentzen, 2005, 7; Henriksen, 2008, 2; with regard to Finland, Section 5.6.4)

#### 6.2.2.2 *The interests of NPOs*

The welfare perspective on volunteering focuses on the role of NPOs in service delivery. Tocqueville (2004, [1835]) was one of the first to appoint the meaning of volunteer involvement. He was very impressed by the impact of associations on American social and democratic life, when he in 1831 observed the development of democracy in America:

I have often admired the extreme skill with which the inhabitants of the United States succeed in proposing a common object to the exertions of a great many men, and in getting them voluntary to pursue it. [...] The English often perform great things singly; whereas the Americans form associations for the smallest undertakings (Tocqueville, 2004 [1835], 629).

Tocqueville inspired Henderson (1895, 327) to write *The Place and Function of Voluntary Associations*, one of the first articles in the academic literature that discussed the concept of volunteer involvement.

From the welfare perspective, volunteering can also be related to discussions on subsidiarity (Textbox 29: Corporatist regime). According to the Oxford English Dictionary, subsidiarity is the idea that a central authority should have a subsidiary function and performs only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level. In this context subsidiarity is considered 'a view on society in which responsibilities are conditioned by the closeness of people's relationships and where intervention of higher levels of society is seen as subsidiary to the obligation of smaller social units' (Spicker, 1991, 3). Heinze (1985, 17) defines the intrinsic value of subsidiarity in the following terms: 'Family, neighbourhood, voluntary organisations, citizen initiatives, self-help groups and social services produce more citizenship and civic responsibility than governmental agencies can' (see also: Muehlebach, 2012, 97). These discussions characterise the role of civic engagement in service delivery, as expressed by NPOs, in contrast to the role of government.

In distinguishing the roles of NPOs from those of governments in the context of service delivery, Kramer (1981, 9) argues that services delivered by NPOs are different from those delivered by governments, given certain virtues that improve NPO services: NPOs act as pioneers and innovators, rouse the public to volunteer, monitor and improve government services, act as advocates for clients and deliver their services in a way and of a kind that public agencies cannot provide. In an investigation of specific aspects of the relationship between governments and non-governmental service-delivery organisations, Najam (2000) finds that many of the aspirations and actions of NPOs are based on 'things that the government refuses to do, does not do enough of, is incapable in doing, or is unable to do' (Najam, 2000, 380). According to these descriptions, the welfare perspective views NPOs as complementary to the government.

When governments began to acknowledge the limitations of a welfare state in the 1990s (Davis Smith, 1998a; Howlett and Locke, 1999), they began to re-evaluate and intensify their relationships with NPOs, invited and contracted with them (e.g. through Compacts; Section 6.2.2.1), to participate in the delivery of public services. The growing use of NPOs to deliver public services is accompanied by risks for NPOs. Lipsky and Rathgeb Smith (1989) show that NPOs dependence of governmental funding, stresses the values that above have been attributed to voluntarism. Weisbrod (1998) even refers to the 'commercial transformation' of some NPOs. Smerdon and Deakin (2010, 316) review programmes that might assist NPOs that are involved in close relationships with governments to pursue and secure a set of freedoms to guarantee the value that distinguishes their services from those provided by government or the commercial sector.

Within this policy context, the involvement of volunteers (a feature of the services delivered by NPOs) began to attract considerable government attention. This attention resulted in an increase in the involvement of NPO volunteers in the delivery of public services increased. The common interest of governments and NPOs in stimulating measures to promote volunteering is rooted largely in the need for more volunteers. The studies of Ostrom are relevant with regard to the need for more volunteers. Ostrom (1990; 2000) studies the exploration of common-pool resources in a way that avoids both excessive consumption and administrative costs. According to Brudney and Meijs (2009), volunteer energy can also be considered a common-pool resource that, like groundwater, animals, soil and plants, can be influenced by human beings. 'A condition which potentially allows not only growth and recycling possibilities, but also stagnation and depletion' (Brudney and Meijs, 2009, 571). Against this background, the need for more volunteers expressed by the parties interested in the welfare perspective on volunteering implies a need for 'collective action' (Olson, 1965; Ostrom, 1990, 5). Actors who can organise the collective perspective differ depending on local circumstances:

In a country with a dominant government, such as the corporatist and social democratic regimes, local government can take this role. In the Dutch context, financed by local government the volunteer centres should be expected to expand to philanthropic resource centres. In countries with dominant philanthropic traditions, such as the liberal regime in the USA, the philanthropic sector has to self-organize. I can envision a role for United Way and community foundations. In the statist regime, in many cases less functioning and less democratic countries, it is the responsibility of (foreign) NGO's to start a sustainable civil society (Meijs, 2010, 21).



Finally, although volunteer involvement in service delivery is an important feature of NPOs, it is not limited to this domain. For example, in the United States, volunteers are also involved in governmental programmes, including State Park volunteers, disaster assistance and AmeriCorps (Rehnborg, Roemer and McVey, 2006, 27). In the Netherlands, municipal fire departments and the police also involve volunteers in their activities.

#### 6.2.2.3 *The interests of volunteers*

Referring to the six functional categories of volunteer motivation (Section 6.1.2, Textbox 15), Hilger (2005b, Table 20) identifies altruism (value) and 'doing for' (social) as central motives of the welfare perspective. This perspective has an *instrumental* character, meaning that volunteers must meet certain requirements in order to guarantee the quality and continuity of service delivery. The instrumental character is attractive to volunteers, as it offers opportunities to employ or to learn special skills and experiences, in addition to means for self-actualisation: 'the more active and individualized monitoring of life' (Hustinx, 2010, 236). In other words, it speaks to the enhancement function of volunteering (Textbox 30). In addition to its instrumental character, the welfare perspective has an *exclusive* character, based on the assumption that people who do not meet the established requirements will be excluded from specific types of volunteering (Section 6.2.3.3)

#### 6.2.2.4 *The interests of third parties*

The welfare perspective can be adopted by third parties as an appropriate means of realising specific goals. 'Promoting civic development in young people through school-based community service programmes has become a key educational goal in many countries' (Meinhard and Brown, 2009, 27; Karr and Bekkers, 2008; Sarre and Tarling, 2010, 294) or a means of promoting the 'altruistic engagement' of young people (Sarre and Tarling, 2010, 296). 'In the US, where service learning has been approached with renewed vigour over the past 3 decades, it is seen as an antidote to the steady decline in communal and civic participation' (Meinhard and Brown, 2006, 27). In the UK, a range of youth volunteering programmes were launched in 2010, including the 'National Citizen Service' initiative, a six-week structured programme to be undertaken by school leavers (Strickland, 2010, 253). In 2011, the Dutch government introduced a bill into Parliament that commits secondary students to 30 hours of volunteering<sup>97</sup>. Companies are adopting volunteering programmes as a part of their policies of corporate social responsibility (Dekker and Peters, 2008). Judges are imposing volunteering as alternative sentences. Therapists are offering their clients volunteering opportunities in order to encourage their social integration or rehabilitation (Hustinx, Meijs and Ten Hoorn, 2009) and service clubs are developing community service activities (Wuthnow, 1998, 9). The actual contribution of third-party programmes in the delivery of voluntary services should not be overestimated. These contributions are temporary, episodic, for a few hours or with tens of volunteers for just one day. In the realisation of these programmes, these parties are significantly dependent upon the willingness of organisations to offer appropriate opportunities for volunteering. Organisations that involve volunteers are particularly likely to cooperate with third parties whose programmes meet their requirements or those that are willing to provide the necessary resources (e.g. special coaching or funding). The possi-

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<sup>97</sup> In 2012 a new Cabinet decided to repeal this programme in 2014/2015.

bility that episodic volunteer involvement could pass into permanent volunteering could also motivate to participate in third-party programmes.

### **6.2.3 Relationship between volunteers and organisations**

#### *6.2.3.1 Volunteer management*

In response to governmental policies, increasing numbers of NPOs are starting to provide public services, and they are involving volunteers in their service delivery process (Hutchison and Ockenden, 2008). To ensure the provision of high-quality services, programme management is the most effective management style for this context (Section 6.1.5). Organisations need to recruit, select, train and retain volunteers who can fulfil certain requirements. The additional funding that NPOs receive for the delivery of public services enables them to employ volunteer administrators and to invest in the support and management of volunteers (Hutchison and Ockenden, 2008). The management of volunteers takes priority, given that placing demands on volunteers can help an organisation to increase the quality and continuity of activities and services. Volunteers may be more likely to respond positively to these pressures if their jobs or organisations offer them 'credits' that are consistent with the demands that are placed upon them. Examples of this type of credit include recognition, appreciation, insurance, expense reimbursement and training, as well as opportunities to utilise or develop competences, bear responsibility or influence the policy of an organisation (Liao-Troth, 2008). In their roles as human resource managers, volunteer administrators are responsible for ensuring the conditions that will induce volunteers to fulfil their demands.

From the welfare perspective, volunteer administrators seek to connect the willingness of citizens to volunteer with their organisations' needs for volunteer effort. At least in the Netherlands, the willing of citizens to volunteer has changed little since the 1970s (Dekker, Hart and Faulk, 2007), although their motives for volunteering and the conditions under which they volunteer have changed considerably (Section 1.1). Since that time, public policies and funding (Section 6.2.2.2) have increasingly involved volunteers in working with more vulnerable people in higher risk situations (Gaskin, 2007). As a consequence, volunteer administrators have had to devote special attention to health, safety, risk assessments, child protection and background checks when managing the work of volunteers (Ministerie van SZW, 2008; Hutchison and Ockenden, 2008). Connecting the organisation's need for volunteer effort with the motives and conditions of today's engaged citizen is one of the factors that adds an element of challenge to the job of a volunteer administrator.

At any point, volunteers may impose their own limits on their commitment. For example, concerns about risk and liability can be a reason for not volunteering (Low and colleagues 2007). The need to provide references, adhere to policies and procedures and agree to background checks may cause volunteers to feel that volunteering has become overly bureaucratic. For some, these requirements may be a reason for not volunteering (Low and colleagues, 2007).

#### *6.2.3.2 The position of paid staff in relation to volunteers*

With regard to the different positions that volunteers can hold in relation to paid staff within NPOs (Section 6.1.6), the welfare perspective assumes structures in which volun-

teers support the work of paid staff, as well as those in which paid staff support the work of volunteers. To the best of our knowledge, no research has been conducted on the proportions of these two models in the delivery of services.

### 6.2.3.3 *The character of volunteering*

The welfare perspective stresses the service functions of volunteering (Textbox 1), thereby providing an impetus for the professionalisation of volunteering (Devilee, 2008). In the process of professionalisation, an organisation may require its volunteers to behave in a more 'business-like' manner (Dart, 2004). In many cases, volunteers are expected to comply with strict job descriptions and minimum time expectations, undergo selection procedures and participate in at least some level of training. The effect of these requirements is to relieve volunteers of some of their ownership and capacity for self-governance, and it imposes the obligation to comply with agreed-upon procedures, standards and demands (Meijs and Delleman, 2006; Hutchison and Ockenden, 2008, 18).

If NPOs lack financial means, the availability of public funds can force them to assign higher priority to the delivery of public services than to activities that are desired by their members or communities (IVAR, 2006), essentially relinquishing some extent of their ownership of their activities. From the welfare perspective, the character of volunteering is more instrumental than it is an expression of community or personal engagement. Dekker (2005, 3) characterises volunteering within service-delivery organisations as 'unpaid work': 'doing something job-like for a common interest or from a willingness to sacrifice, to give time'.

Emphasising professionalisation and structural forms of volunteering runs counter to a common trend towards more flexible forms of volunteer involvement (Boesenkool and Verweel, 2004). Due to higher demands and the need to select the best volunteers, the welfare perspective limits the ability of volunteers to drop in and help informally. In essence, the prevalence of this perspective affects the inclusiveness of volunteering (Rochester, 2001) and thus *excludes* citizens from volunteer involvement. With regard to availability, Hustinx (2008, 4) indicates that many NPOs are seeking new ways to facilitate episodic and even one-off types of involvement, which allow volunteers to perform activities without formally belonging to the organisation and without the need to establish enduring social ties to other volunteers. The Hands-On Network (Hands-on Network, 2009) in the United States, Nederland Cares (2008) in the Netherlands and projects for employee volunteering are examples of this kind of involvement. Hustinx observes that this development affects volunteering 'from within' (Section 3.1.2). Volunteering without strong and durable ties with the organisation implies smaller 'net costs' for the volunteer, compared to those who volunteer on a regular time-intensive basis and imply higher costs to the NPO. In other words, organisations expend considerable effort in order to realise a relatively limited level of volunteer involvement (Hustinx, 2008, 5).

In terms of the responsibility and control that volunteers have with regard to setting goals within NPOs, operational volunteers should be distinguished from governance (goal-setting) volunteers. All NPOs are governed by volunteers. Depending on the type (Section 6.1.6) and size of the NPO, the requirements that governance volunteers are expected to meet can differ from those expected of operational volunteers.

In volunteer-supported NPOs, operational volunteers exercise very modest levels of responsibility and control; in most cases, their autonomy is limited to pre-defined areas of

responsibility (specific tasks). In volunteer-run NPOs, there is considerable overlap between operational and governance volunteers. Some organisations establish special councils for their operational volunteers. These councils are provided with information about the administrative and managerial issues of the organisation, and they have the right to a voice in these matters.

## 6.3 The democratic perspective

### 6.3.1 Introduction

The democratic perspective on volunteering stresses the role of civic engagement, volunteering and associations in shaping the political conduct of society. On the importance of associations for democracy, Tocqueville (2004 [1835]) remarks:

In democratic countries the science of association is the mother of science; the progress of all the rest depends upon the progress it has made. Amongst the laws which rule human societies there is one which seems to be more precise and clear than all others. If men are to remain civilized, or to become so, the art of associating together must grow and improve in the same ratio in which the equality of conditions is increased (Tocqueville, 2004 [1835], 632).

Streeck and Schmitter (1985, 228) believe that an improved understanding of the actual and potential role of associations may significantly increase the range of strategic alternatives for the solution of public policy problems.

The democratic perspective considers volunteering as a way to provide input and legitimacy to political systems (either directly or indirectly), and as a way to participate in the implementation of decisions (Hilger, 2005b). Walzer (1983) describes the political role of citizens, arguing that individual engagement in the political sphere arises from the connectedness with community. In Walzer's view, the political sphere is not limited to parliaments and governments, but includes 'direct democratic activities' as well:

The citizen must be ready and able, when his time comes, to deliberate with his fellows, listen and be listened to, take responsibility for what he says and does. Ready and able: not only in states, cities, and towns but wherever power is exercised, in companies and factories, too, and in unions, faculties, and professions (Walzer, 1983, 320).

Walzer's vision on political sphere corresponds to Habermas' (1973, 61) concept of *public sphere*, 'that domain of our societal life wherein something like a public opinion can be developed'. The public sphere contains voluntary non-governmental and non-economical organisations like churches, cultural associations, academies, independent media, associations in the area of sports, recreation and professions, debating clubs, citizen forums, civic initiatives, political parties, unions (Habermas, 1990, 46).

Beck's (1997) elaboration on the concept of *subpolitics* as 'a form of politics outside and beyond the representative institutions of the political system of nation-states' (Beck 1996b, 18) fits well with the above-mentioned thoughts of Walzer and Habermas. Beck refers to politics as emerging and hiding away in new places, including the everyday ac-

tivities and choices of people (e.g. very private actions of green consumerism), as well as the informal and spontaneous political actions of social movements (Holzer and Sørensen, 2001, 3). Subpolitics are most clearly visible in the activities of such voluntary organisations as social and consumer movements, protest groups and NGOs (Holzer and Sørensen, 2001, 11).

Etzioni (2005 [1996], 39), another supporter of the democratic perspective on volunteering, argues that 'individuals and subgroups that have structural opportunities to express themselves provide a counterweight to the tendency of rulers to omit changes in social arrangements and public policy, that are necessary as a consequence of changes in the external environment or in the social constellation'.

The democratic perspective emphasises the process of strengthening civil society by promoting and enabling the involvement of citizens and by developing civility and 'civiness'. According to Evers (2010), this vision of civil society transcends just its meaning for the third sector:

First of all there is the concept of civil society understood as the field of associations and social networks outside the state and markets. Then there is the view [...] that insists on the key role of the public sphere for turning contributions of a multitude of individual and organised groups of citizens into a civil and civic whole. And finally there is an enlarged understanding, where the concept of civil society stands for a type of society that is defined by all its associational networks, including community life and the family, and their interplay with markets and the political system of a liberal democracy (Evers, 2010, 116).

The democratic perspective associates volunteering with engagement and participation in decisions, and it focuses on the role that citizens play in influencing policies or providing legitimacy to public policy. Rifkin (2004, 278) considers the formation of *Civicus*<sup>98</sup> (Civicus, 2009) in 1993 as a new voice for democracy. This perspective argues for an expansive definition of volunteering and is interested in new expressions of civic engagement. From this perspective, volunteering can be defined as *active citizenship*: an individual's responsibility towards the community or polity (Dekker, 2005).

### 6.3.1.1 Definition and preconditions

In the democratic perspective, the definition of volunteering includes a wide array of forms in which citizens can express their engagement and involvement in or concern for society. The focus is on the assets and engagement of citizens and on the conditions necessary to transform these assets and engagement into volunteer effort. According to the Social Development Council in the Netherlands (RMO, 2000b, 23), 'individuals are more likely to feel concerned about or responsible for the non-private context in organisations that offer opportunities for them to apply their own qualities and resources.' In *Better Together*, Putnam and colleagues (2003) argue that governments are particularly well positioned to provide these opportunities:

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<sup>98</sup> An international organisation to cultivate volunteerism and community service.

Meanwhile, more pervasively – often almost invisible in the background – government policies were crucial for substantive results achieved in many cases. Indeed, in some cases specific government actions were prerequisites for the creation of social capital. [...] So the argument sometimes heard that civil society alone can solve public issues if only the state get out of the way is simply silly (Putnam, Feltstein and Cohen 2003, 273).

Recent research on civic initiatives in the Netherlands (Hurenkamp and colleagues, 2006) affirms these findings and shows that the availability of meeting places, governmental appreciation, facilities for communication and helpful social workers or public administrators are preconditions for civic involvement.

#### *6.3.1.1 Volunteerism versus activism*

Most definitions of volunteering contain the following four elements: it is non-obligatory, it is unpaid, it takes place in an organised context and it is carried out at least in part for the benefit of others, a specific organisation or society as a whole (Govaart and colleagues, 2001, 16; Enquete-Kommission, 2002, 86). Voting, which is obviously an act of active citizenship (albeit an individual one), does not fit within this definition, although active membership in a political party does. 'We consider numerous ways in which citizens express their voice – not only by voting but also by taking part in a range of other activities such as getting involved in campaigns, making political contributions, working informally in the community, and contacting government officials' (Verba, Lehman Schlozman and Brady, 1995, 2; Strickland, 2010, 254). With regard to the inclusion of expressive civic actions within the definition of volunteering, Musick and Wilson (2008, 20) compare and contrast volunteering and activism, observing that 'volunteering targets people; activism targets structures', and that 'most activists are volunteers'. They propose adopting an expansive definition that considers activism as a sub-type of volunteering. This sub-type of activism is distinguishable by a number of characteristics, including the fact that activism demands collective action and is directed towards achieving a collective good.

### **6.3.2 The interests of various parties according to the democratic perspective**

#### *6.3.2.1 The interests of government*

Through active membership in a political party, citizens provide input into the political system. Political parties are very dependent upon the voluntary efforts of their members, both during elections and to represent them in local, regional and national governmental organs. Civic involvement in political parties is a vital governmental interest. Through innovative use of online social networks, the presidential campaign of Barack Obama in the United States in 2008 was able to gain the support of more than two million registered volunteers. The Obama transition team and campaign organisation developed a number of ways to keep these supporters active (Moore, 2008).

Civic involvement in non-political organisations serves the political system as well. Dekker (2005) cites Verba and colleagues, (1995), who observe that non-political voluntary organisations can play a crucial role in the recruitment of political support. Participation in these organisations can also expose members to other sorts of political experiences and help them to develop a variety of citizenship skills through such activities as planning

and conducting meetings or writing letters. '[V]oluntary associations may also function as "schools for democracy" in a broader sense: people learn to tolerate and to deal with diverging opinions, broaden their sphere of interest, engender norms of cooperation and trust among members' (Dekker, 2005, 7). Related with this idea Evans and Boyte (1992, ix) introduce the notion of 'Free Places', which they describe as 'public places in the community [...] in which people are able to learn a new self-respect, a deeper and more assertive group identity, public skills, and values of cooperation and civic virtue [...] in settings between private lives and large scale institutions [...] with a relative open and participatory character'. When Uzbekistan gained its independence NGOs appeared an important factor for building a civil society and democracy. 'Volunteerism development is one of the methods to form active, civically minded members of society' (Bahrieva, 2006, 37).

*Active or Civil Society:* Proceeding from the notion that contributing to shaping the social order helps individuals to feel more at home within that order, the 1968 *Declaration on Social Development* adopted by the Commission for Social Development of the United Nations Organisations (UNO) proposes obliging citizens to contribute to social development. The concept of an *active society* is included in this Declaration (Ewijk, 2006). Marston and McDonald (2006, 68) define an active society as 'the striving at making all citizens workers.' The concept of active society would later evolve into the concept of 'civil society'. Partly in response to the UNO Declaration the Dutch government began developing volunteering policy and launched an experiment with volunteer centres in 1971 (CRM, 1975b, 1). Another contributing factor involved the government's fear that the welfare state, with its increasing professionalisation, might crowd out the specific value of volunteering to an active society (Textbox 32)

Textbox 32: Basic assumptions underlying Dutch volunteering policy (CRM, 1975b, 1)

*'The principle of social participation and self-activation means that individual citizens must have the opportunity to indicate the direction of the desired development of society. [...] Volunteering can be considered as a means of participation and self-activation. [...] Situations, relations and problems arise repeatedly within society that are not addressed by existing provisions and for which the involvement of volunteers and voluntary agencies is needed. [...] The Ministry deems it important to elaborate the possibilities of a volunteer centre that will encourage the co-ordination and cooperation of volunteering. These centres will accomplish this by bringing together and coordinating the supply of and demand for volunteers, in addition to developing concepts for a modern design for volunteering.'*

In an exploration of what makes democracy work, Putnam (1993) observes the important role that voluntary organisations and associations play in the education of virtuous citizens (Textbox 33). This observation increased the importance of volunteering – a prominent feature of associations and voluntary organisations – within the democratic perspective.

Textbox 33: 'Making Democracy Work' (Putnam, 1993)

*'As the proportion of non-virtuous citizens increases significantly, the ability of liberal societies to function successfully will progressively diminish' (Putnam, 1993, 87).*

*'Civil associations contribute to the effectiveness and stability of democratic government, both of their internal effects on individual members and because of their external effects on the wider polity' (Putnam, 1993, 89).*

*'Taking part in choral society or a bird-watching club can teach self-discipline and an appreciation for the joys of successful collaboration. ...Case studies of third world development conclude that local associations are a crucial ingredient in successful strategies of rural development' (Putnam, 1993, 90).*

*'The more civic a region the more effective its government is' (Putnam, 1993, 98).*

*'Collective life in the civic regions is eased by the expectation that others will probably follow the rules' (Putnam, 1993, 111).*

In the Netherlands, recent research on 'outsiders' inversely confirms Putnam's findings:

Citizens who complain the loudest about politics are the least involved socially. Compared to the average citizen, they vote less frequently, contribute less to volunteering and have fewer social contacts' (Giesen, 2008, 3).

This conclusion corresponds to those of Deth and Leijenaar (1994) in their investigation of the contribution of volunteering to social cohesion and political participation in the Netherlands. They examine the political participation of administrative and managerial volunteers, characterising them as socially active people who are extremely interested in politics. The majority have faith in the political system. Almost all volunteers participating in the research exercised their right to vote.

*Fostering a civil society:* The significance of volunteering to a democratic and civil society has been acknowledged both implicitly and explicitly. In the UK, the 'Third Way' was a guiding principle of the Tony Blair's New Labour Government. It highlighted the roles that volunteering and voluntary action can play in fostering a civil society, re-branding volunteering as a Third-Way activity (Howlett and Locke, 1999). In Germany, Schröder's *New Middle* and strategies emphasising the empowerment of the poor and 'assisted self-reliance' in the developing world can be understood in the same way (Textbox 34). The latter theme is elaborated at the end of this section.

Textbox 34: The Third Way (as summarised in Salamon and colleagues, 2003, 2)

*'Recent dramatic breakthroughs in information technology and literacy have awakened people to the realisation that their circumstances may not be immutable, that opportunities may be better elsewhere, and that change is possible. They have also made it easier to form the organisations through which to translate these sentiments into effective social action. This has stimulated citizen activism; awakened gender, environmental, and ethnic consciousness; and prompted heightened interest in human rights.*

*At the same time, dissatisfaction has grown with both the market and the state as mechanisms to solve the interrelated social, economic, and environmental crises of our time. The state stands accused of stifling initiative, creating unresponsive bureaucracies, and generally absorbing escalating shares of national income. The market on the other hand, has been criticized for ignoring human need and producing untenable social inequalities. The result has been an increasingly frantic search for a "middle way" between sole reliance on the market and sole reliance on the state to cope with public problems – a search that is evident in Prime Minister Tony Blair's emphasis on a "Third Way" in the U.K., Gerhard Schröder's "New Middle" in Germany and strategies emphasizing empowerment of the poor and "assisted self-reliance" in the developing world'.*

This 'politicised use' of the voluntary sector emphasised the more radical elements of the sector's development, mutual aid and pressure-group functions instead of its more traditional, service-delivery role. In the UK, this emphasis generated the grassroots mechanism that some local left-wing Labour authorities (most prominently, the Greater London



Council) attempted to utilise in confronting the Conservative Government's centralisation of power and load-shedding policies of the 1980s (Kendall and Knapp, 1993, 14). In 1996, an independent inquiry into the voluntary sector in the UK recommended a concordat (or 'compact': Section 6.2.2.1) that would embody agreed-upon guidelines for relationships between the government and the voluntary sector (Plowden, 2003). This Compact, adopted in 1998 (Home Office, 1998), is based on the philosophy that voluntary and community activity is fundamental to the development of a democratic, social and inclusive society (Howlett and Locke, 1999). Giddens (1998) argues that volunteering can contribute to a process of deepening and widening democracy, which is an essential component of the Third Way.

The influence of the Third Way in the governmental administration of the UK led to the reorganisation of the 'Voluntary and Community Unit' as the 'Active Community Unit'. The new name implied that the governmental focus on volunteering was shifting in the direction of involving people in communities (Howlett and Locke, 1999). In *ChangeUp* (Home Office, 2004, 1), former Home Office Minister Fiona Mactaggert writes:

Voluntary and community activity is a crucial part of public life – connecting people and helping them to shape their communities. Enabling people to become active in their communities and supporting frontline organisations is at the heart of the government's commitment to renewing civil society and involving voluntary and community sector organisations in service delivery, especially in meeting the needs of those who are socially excluded.

*ChangeUp* was the framework that would provide the architecture of how support for voluntary and community organisations throughout the UK would develop in next decade. It is at this point that the democratic, welfare and community perspectives (as discussed in Section 6.5) came to coincide in the UK.

In the Netherlands, the government has worked to decrease the distance between government and citizens by focusing on the citizen as co-designer, co-performer and consumer of public policies. For this reason, it has been increasingly shifting the responsibility for public social policies from the national to the local level since the mid-1980s. This shift is based on the assumption that local governments are in the best position to involve citizens in public policies. In their turn, municipalities are meeting this expectation by developing neighbourhood policies (Ministerie van VWS, 1998). In this context, the promotion of volunteering and cooperation with existing voluntary organisations appears a useful means of using public policies (including local policy) to shape civic involvement. However the research of Jager-Vreugdenhil (2012, 81) tempers the expectation that public policies can really shape the specific civic involvement, preferred by governments. In addition to the UK and the Netherlands, the government of Denmark, which is in transition from a welfare state to a welfare society, has been stimulating cooperation between local government and local voluntary organisations since 2004. The initiatives include providing funding for seven local 'model volunteer centres' (Henriksen, 2008).

*Third World development policies:* The relevance of volunteerism for the developing world (Rifkin, 2004, 280) is recognised by national governments and international institutions, including the World Bank and United Nations (UNV, 2011a, 48). With the *United Nations Volunteers* (UNV) programme, the UN organisation contributes to peace and development through volunteering worldwide.

UNV pursues global recognition of volunteers for peace and development, encourages the integration of volunteerism into development programmes, and promotes the mobilization of increasing numbers and greater diversity of volunteers contributing to peace and development. UNV helps countries to foster and develop volunteerism as a force for sustainable development. We help countries to improve public inclusion and participation in social, economic and political development, and we support the growth of volunteerism within communities as a form of mutual self-help (UNV, 2011a).

Through the Civil Society Fund and the Civil Society Sponsorship Programme, the World Bank provides support in the form of 'training and capacity-building programs with a strong civil society component [...] geared to generating grassroots demand for better accountability, transparency, and governance at the local level [...] and with the aim] to improve the capability of governments to communicate and engage effectively with civil society and reform projects' (World Bank, 2009, xvi).

The Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy<sup>99</sup> recently examined the form that Dutch development aid should take in the future. The report 'Less Pretension, More Ambition' (WRR, 2010) resulting from this examination, reflects upon the role of NGOs, concluding that their role in development aid should be neither under-estimated nor over-estimated. The social-capital thesis, which emphasises that a strong civil society is a precondition for democracy and development (WRR, 2010, 265) is a leading principle within Dutch development aid. The WRR (2010, 267) has doubts about the view that equates NGOs with civil society and social capital. Western NGOs find it difficult to build civil society in Southern countries from outside. External financial support even can produce an artificial civil society and attract entrepreneurs. Moreover, the concept of NGOs used by Western financiers does not fit within every society. In order to produce the social capital that is necessary to build civil society, people in developing countries must learn to trust each other and work together to establish together their own NGOs (WRR, 2010, 267). The increase in the number and size of NGOs raises the question of what benefits Western NGOs still have to offer. The WRR report distinguishes between three roles that Western and indigenous NGOs can perform in development. The first is the role of *service provider* (e.g. food distribution or hospital construction). The second is the role of *watch-dog*, which influences the policies of national governments, as well as both local and international businesses (with regard to their Corporate Social Responsibility policies). The third role is that of the *community developer*, with a wide array of tasks, ranging from the empowerment of disadvantaged groups to the development of a private sector, especially through small producers and by organising microcredit (Helmsing and Knorringa, 2009). In ethnically or religiously fragmented communities, NGOs can strengthen or initiate football clubs, religious organisations, unions or similar NGOs, which that can play a bridging role and help to prevent violence (WRR, 2010, 270). According to the WRR, the third role (i.e. seeking a more regional approach) deserves more attention in the future.

With reference to Social Origin Theory (Salamon and Anheier, 1998), social democratic regimes, as typified by the Scandinavian countries and to a lesser extent by Italy (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 18), support the expressive role of volunteering (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 16) as showed in the democratic perspective on volunteering. In

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<sup>99</sup> Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (WRR)

Sweden, for example, which is low in the ranks of paid employment in the nonprofit sector, a very substantial network of volunteer-based advocacy, recreational and hobby organisations exists within a highly developed welfare state (Salamon and Anheier, 1998, 241). Volunteer centres in Italy, Norway and Denmark are equipped to support small local associations (Section 6.2.1) and to help volunteers start up new activities. In a white paper, the Norwegian government describes volunteer centres as *community centres* (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 13). The UK, Germany and the Netherlands recognise the significance of volunteering as viewed from the democratic perspective. Nonetheless, these countries have no concrete measures for enhancing volunteering in this context. One possible explanation is that, in these countries, the development of volunteering policies is largely the domain of national governments or institutions, although local governments are responsible for carrying out and financing these policies. Due to lack of resources or administrative capacity, local authorities often do not implement national advisories.

### 6.3.2.2 *The interests of NPOs and NGOs*

The democratic perspective focuses on the expressive function of NPOs (Textbox 1) and manifests itself particularly in the area of campaigning and advocacy organisations. As showed above in the example of development aid, the direct influence of these NPOs or NGOs on politics should not be underestimated. In addition to participation in political organisations, other public opportunities to contribute indirectly to democracy have been emerging in recent decades. From social movements promoting private interests in government to the advocacy work currently being performed by many NPOs or NGOs, civic groups have been a significant factor in agenda-setting, interest mediation and even decision-making (Davis Smith, 2001, 18).

Research conducted in Denmark illustrates the significance of the expressive function. Torpe (2003, 338) reveals a tight relationship between associations and political institutions at both the local and the national level. It seems obvious that people who are engaged in associations are also more likely to become more engaged in local politics. For this reason, the Danish national government encourages municipalities to join forces with associations in order to perform necessary social tasks. Danish local authorities have two main reasons for cooperating with associations: associations have active resources (especially in the form of knowledge), and they can speak on behalf of 'grassroots support' (Torpe, 2003). According to the Danish government, 'voluntary social organisations and associations thus play a democratic role, for instance by being a platform where all social groups can express their views and defend their interests, and by being a forum where communities emerge and develop' (Denmark Ministry of Social Affairs, 2001, 9).

With regard to the relationship between democracy and volunteering, as described above, it is important to note that volunteering is not necessarily always positive for democracy. According to Walzer (2004) 'there is a considerable space for types of community-based associations that can be located between "greedy" communities (which would like to determine every aspect of their members' lives, and, on the other, liberal democratic associations that can be joined and left easily' (Evers, 2010, 115). Many mainstream voluntary agencies have an anti-democratic character ('the NIMBY's of this world'), or they have caused damage to democracy, as with the Weimar Republic (Davis Smith, 2001, 20). Nonetheless, it is clear that volunteering can thrive, even under the most extreme of totalitarian conditions. For example, in a reference to Rose (1998),

Davis Smith (2001) concludes with the idea that independent volunteering had not occurred at all under the Soviet system: 'The conditions may have been harsh, but many grass-roots and community-based agencies found a way to exist'. The 'Monday demonstrations' in Leipzig (*Leipziger Montagsdemonstrationen*) provide a well-known illustration: September 1989, citizens of the East German Leipzig started meeting in the St. Nicholas Church (*Nicolaikirche*) each Monday to pray for peace. In the course of time, the small group grew into a broad demonstration for democracy and social development throughout East Germany. These demonstrations provided an essential impetus for the fall of the Berlin Wall (Schoonenboom, 2009; Rifkin, 2004, 279; Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2009). The civic demonstrations for democracy in Iran, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria in early 2011, can be added to this series of events: 'In Latin America in the 1980s, in Eastern Europe in the 1990s and, most recently, in the Arab world, aided by the rapid expansion of digital communications, people have articulated their desire for participatory democratic processes through volunteer-based campaigning and activism' (UNV, 2011a, xxi).

One specific aspect of the democratic perspective enhances the importance of NPOs that are focused on service delivery. In the interest of transparency and social accountability, increasing numbers of NPOs have started to offer their clients, consumers, volunteers and employees the possibility of consultation and participation in matters of policy and goal-setting. This consultation and participation is often formalised in special councils or committees.

### 6.3.2.3 *The interests of volunteers*

The democratic perspective focuses on civic participation and considers volunteers as active and engaged citizens. In the mid-1990s, the EuroVOL study collected reference data concerning volunteering throughout Europe and found that volunteer involvement enables people to play an active role in democratic society. If volunteering is to realise the potential attributed to it in the concept of civil society, it is necessary to guarantee the conditions for participation for each citizen (Paulwitz, 1997). At the 2009 General Assembly Conference of the European Volunteer Centre in Malmö, Sweden (October 14-16) a debate was held on the question, 'Do we need laws on volunteering?' (CEV, 2009). This debate linked volunteering to democracy. Members from Hungary, Slovakia and other new European countries expressed support for such laws. Until recently, volunteering was neither natural nor without risk in these countries.

In traditional views, participation focuses on inputs and fulfils the function of informing those in power so that they can take decisions consistent with the preferences of citizens. In some cases, participation includes direct citizen involvement in decision-making. This approach is appropriate to a welfare state.<sup>100</sup> In a welfare society, the policy cycle consists of agenda-setting, policy formulation, decision-making, implementation and evaluation. With its strong emphasis on civic engagement, the concept of the welfare society seeks to 're-invent' government, thereby attributing a prominent role to the volunteer involvement of citizens and their communities with regard to development and per-

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<sup>100</sup> In a welfare state, the state plays a key role in protecting and promoting the social well-being of its citizens. Within such societies, some degree of welfare is not actually provided by the state; it is provided directly to welfare recipients by a combination of independent volunteers, corporations and government services.

formance of policies (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). The transformation from welfare state to welfare society was addressed in Section 3.1.1.

From this perspective, Hilger's (2005b) scheme (Table 20) accentuates the 'share of interests' as a motive for volunteer involvement. Referring to the six functional categories of motivation (Textbox 30) the democratic perspective places primary emphasis on motives related to values. The democratic perspective has an inclusive and expressive character: all citizens must have the opportunity to raise their voices.

#### *6.3.2.4 The interests of third parties*

The concept of 'guided volunteering', elaborated by Hustinx, Meijs and Ten Hoorn (2009, 264) can be considered as an example of a more or less coerced volunteering activity that contributes to the democratic perspective of volunteering. Hustinx and colleagues discern four strategies for manipulating the potential for volunteering:

- Self-activation within sports associations, and parent participation in schools;
- Volunteering as a teaching method in schools and universities;
- Volunteering as a 'social period' for youth (e.g. Peace Corps, European Voluntary Services);
- Volunteering according to the principle of reward (e.g. 'Time Banking' and 'Local Exchange Trading Schemes, LETS) or punishment (e.g. community service in lieu of detention) (Hustinx and colleagues, 2009, 266).

Although some of these developments are initiated by the government, they are particularly interesting to schools, whose service learning and community service programmes focus on the development of civic virtues or active citizenship. They are also interesting to judges who can impose community service penalties. This perspective on volunteer involvement is likely to be of very modest interest to companies, therapists, service clubs or similar third parties.

### **6.3.3 Relationship between volunteers and organisations**

#### *6.3.3.1 Volunteer management*

Organisations that are arranged in a manner consistent with the democratic perspective (e.g. advocacy, campaigning and grassroots organisations) accept anyone who supports their cause as a volunteer. This approach is diametrically opposed to that of organisations that better reflect the welfare perspective, which include only those volunteers who meet certain requirements. Campaigning, advocacy and grassroots organisations do not have individual customers or clients; they aim to convince or to take on the entire world (Meijs and Ten Hoorn, 2008, 32). Organisations that reflect the democratic perspective therefore face a management dilemma. On the one hand, they seek as many supporters as possible to promote their ideas; on the other hand, they try to keep their ideologies as pure as possible. One feature of campaigning organisations is that the majority of their work is performed by a relatively small group of highly involved (i.e. core) volunteers, while cultivating sympathy and support (in most cases, financial) from a broad circle of more peripherally involved volunteers. The management challenge in this type of organisations is to draw connections between core and peripheral volunteers. Peripheral volunteers, who are necessary for practical, social and financial support, may quit if 'ideologi-

cal commitment is more orthodox and the member relationship more intense' (Hyde, 2000, 40). Section 6.1.5 distinguishes between programme and membership management. Organisations that reflect the democratic perspective on volunteering are likely to gain the most benefit from adopting membership management in carrying out their volunteer policies. According to Hoogendam and Meijs (1998, 31) the most prevalent management challenge for NPOs from the membership management perspective is a mismatch between organisational capabilities and ambitions. The ability to achieve organisational ambitions is limited to the capabilities of the volunteers/members who are involved.

### 6.3.3.2 *The position of paid staff in relation to volunteers*

Membership management proceeds from the possibilities and needs of the volunteers. The people involved decide what is to be done and by whom. The focus of membership management is to assign tasks to volunteers, ideally according to their preferences, instead of assigning volunteers to tasks. Individual members must be asked what they want to do. There is not much distance between governance and executive volunteers, and there are many personal ties. Membership management is usually characterised by a strong organisational culture (Meijs and Hoogstad, 2001, 49-51).

Some NPOs that reflect the democratic perspective employ professional volunteer administrators. The legal position, tasks and required competencies of volunteer administrators performing membership management differ from those of volunteer administrators who perform programme management. One characteristic of membership management is that, in many cases, volunteers are formally the volunteer administrator's employer. Volunteer administrators do not simply assign tasks to volunteers; they first explore their capacities and preferences, after which they match these aspects to the needs of the organisation or develop new activities in order to meet the expressed preferences or to use the available capacities. One important aim of capacity-oriented volunteer policies is to enhance the active involvement of members within their associations, and of residents within their neighbourhoods, reflected in the willingness to stand for each other or to influence their neighbourhood. Professionals who support capacity-oriented policies provide members and residents with the conditions and support, necessary to perform their own goals independently. In England, the United States and the Netherlands, many NPOs have experience with capacity-oriented volunteer policies, especially at the neighbourhood level. In England, the *New Deal for Communities* (Communities, 2009) addresses citizen capacity on the neighbourhood level. The *Asset Based Community Development* (ABCD, 2009) developed in the United States by McKnight and Kretzmann also represents an approach that taps the assets and capacities that are present in the community. The ABCD-approach and other capacity-oriented methods have been applied in the Netherlands as well (Bos, 2007; Davelaar and Veldboer, 2008).

At the 2009 General Assembly Conference of the European Volunteer Centre CEV, (2009), a presentation by Volunteer Centres Ireland (Volunteer Centres Ireland, 2009) and Vodafone Ireland Foundation involved a web-based toolkit and marketing campaign developed to engage with volunteers more creatively and to help volunteer centres and NPOs use volunteers with many different skills. The principle of this web-based toolkit is to present the skills and capacities of volunteers instead of the vacancies of organisations. This approach is relevant to the conceptual model of matching volunteers developed by Meijs

and Brudney (2004) that combines three components in the matching process: availability, assets and assignment.

### *6.3.3.3 The character of volunteering*

From the democratic perspective, volunteering takes place within grassroots organisations, advocacy and campaigning groups, and it is synonymous with active citizenship. By organising themselves into informal groups or associations, citizens are able to voice their beliefs, ideals or objections and try to influence public, business or private policies in order to realise their ideals. From this perspective, volunteering has an expressive and inclusive character. Commitment to organisational goals is often expressed through formal membership. As a consequence of membership, volunteers have the right to influence policies and the duty to contribute time and money. Membership fees allow such organisations to maintain financial independence.

## **6.4 The economic perspective**

### **6.4.1 Introduction**

The economic perspective on volunteering focuses on the direct and indirect impact of civic engagement and volunteering on the economy and employment. This section provides a brief introduction to four macro approaches regarding the direct contribution of civic engagement and volunteering to the economy and employment, followed by an elaboration of their indirect contributions to the economy (more relevant in this context), by considering their impact on work relations.

First, it is important to note that most NPOs (or more specifically, the organisational context within which civic engagement and volunteering is expressed) are rooted in initiatives taken by volunteers in the broad area of social interests, including care, cure, education, culture, sports, the environment and developmental aid. Although volunteers continue to play an active role in the operations of the organisations they initiated, in many cases, paid staff members may take over certain responsibilities and tasks as the organisations grow or as their activities become subject to special demands (e.g. with regard to continuity, quality or specific education). The impact of NPOs on the economy and employment in various countries is the subject of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (Salamon and colleagues, 2003). The entire NPO workforce in the 46 countries addressed in this study (consisting of 39.5 million FTE) consists of 57% paid staff and 43% volunteers (Salamon and colleagues 2003, 15). In the late 1990s, the NPO sector represents a \$1.3 trillion industry, amounting to the world's seventh largest economy and a major employer (Salamon and colleagues 2003, 13).

Second, the economic meaning of volunteering can be indicated by counting the costs that are saved through the efforts of volunteers. In the Netherlands, the monetary value of volunteering was calculated for the first time in 1987 (Kloosterman and Renooy, 1987, 79). In 1985, the number of hours that volunteers invested in their organisations corresponded to an average of 20% of the official registered labour force, representing a value of about €15 thousand million.

Third, interesting and important links between the NPO sector and economic development have been observed by Putnam (1993), who studied the implementation of a constitutional provision for regional governments in Italy from 1970-1989. Putnam (1993, 107) explores a number of fundamental questions regarding civic life, finding that regions with a more civic character tend to have more effective governments. The study reveals a very close relationship between the performance of a regional government and the civic character of social and political life within that region. Regions with many civic organisations, newspaper readers and issue-oriented voters apparently have more effective governments. With regard to the economic development in Italy, Putnam (1993, 152) observes that 'the prosperity of the communal republics was arguably the consequence, as much of the cause, of the norms and networks of civic engagement'. As discussed in Section 6.3, the democratic perspective emphasises volunteering as an important feature of civic life and a civil society.

Fourth, researchers on development aid, common resource management and collective action problems appoint to a relation between strong communities with engaged citizens and a healthy economy. With reference to Section 6.3.2.1, it is interesting to comment on the meaning of civic engagement for development aid from both the democratic and economic perspectives. Reflecting on the causes for the actual economic recession, Achterhuis (2010, 116) conducts a deep examination of the principle of 'subsistence-economy', a mechanism in which people live and work in a community that provides the direct means of sustaining life. The classical Greek society uses the word *oikos* to describe a subsistence economy. The literal meaning of *oikos* is 'common household'. In classical Greek society, however, the term 'household' was interpreted much more broadly than it is today. Klamer (2005, 70) describes the *oikos* as a community in which people live and work together, including both slaves and distant relatives. 'They share tasks, food and all other valuable things the *oikos* produces. The *oikos* is a common good for all who are participating' (Achterhuis, 2010, 117). The management of an *oikos* was known as *oikonomia*, the origin of the contemporary word 'economy'.

Subsistence economies are characterised by reciprocity, redistribution of common goods and protection (Achterhuis, 2010, 118). Illich (1981) describes the transition from a society based on subsistence economy to a market economy, 'which a lot of people derived from the right and grip on their own means of life' (Achterhuis, 2010, 119). Ostrom (1990) and Boelens (2008) stimulate a renewed interest for subsistence economies, showing that these economies continue to flourish in small rural communities. Peredo and Christman (2004) support the interest for subsistence economies with a theory of Community-Based Enterprise (CBE). They define a CBE

as a community acting corporately as both entrepreneur and enterprise in pursuit of the common good. CBE is the result of a process in which the community acts entrepreneurially, to create and operate a new enterprise embedded in its existing social structure (Peredo and Christman, 2004, 312).

They refer to the importance of social networks, social capital and strong communities as preconditions for economic development:

Recent research and theory on transitional economies and immigrants, together with growing interest in micro-credits, has had the effect of focusing greater attention on social networks and community issues as important ele-



ments in the understanding of entrepreneurial activity among disadvantaged peoples (Bates, 1997; Cornwall, 1998). Anderson and Jack (2002), among others, have emphasized the role of social capital in facilitating these social networks, and the importance of observing the rules by which this capital is assembled; rules which are, of course, likely to be cultural products (Peredo and Christman, 2004, 316).

If local communities are to attain a position in which they can act as owners of an enterprise, the entrepreneurship must arise within their own community, using the capacities and following the rules that are present within that community:

The institutions of both community and entrepreneurship are frequently employed by governmental and non-governmental agencies, as well as foundations, in the effort to fight unemployment and generate economic growth in poor regions. Selsky and Smith (1994) use the term 'community entrepreneurship' to describe entrepreneurial leadership that arises within nonprofit organisations. By contrast, as indicated earlier by our definition of CBE, we focus instead on local communities, which create collective business ventures, and through them or their results aim to contribute to *both* local economic *and* social development (Peredo and Christman, 2004, 325).

It is also possible to apply CBE in order to help revitalise small and remote communities and to reduce the need for migration due to economic circumstances. This approach is relevant in both developing countries and contemporary Western countries. For example, in the Netherlands, the KNHM (2011) supports people who would like to improve their neighbourhoods, villages or cities. It assists people who want to realise their ideas aimed at improving the physical living environment. The focus of KNMH is on such topics as regional/local food, sustainable local energy, liveability and demographic changes, recreation & tourism, and cultural heritage & landscape. As mentioned in Section 6.3.2.1, CBE also fits with the preferred policies of World Bank and Dutch development aid.

The relation between a healthy economy with engaged citizens and strong communities is also applicable to the present financial crisis. In the UK, 'concern that recent problems in the financial sector were partially indicative of a deeper ethical deficit in society' (Strickland, 2010, 255) has generated public policies that focus 'on citizenship in the identity sense - of building common bonds, shared values and fostering identification with communities and the UK through shared experiences. [...] It is interesting that volunteering is seen as a key vehicle for the development of these common bonds and positive that the potential for the achievement of substantive outcomes through volunteering is recognised' (Strickland, 2010, 255). The section below describes the emphasis of the economic perspective on the impact of the civil society sector on work relations.

## **6.4.2 The interests of various parties according to the economic perspective**

### *6.4.2.1 The interests of government*

Volunteering can be considered as an alternative to unemployment. In the late 1970s, the ideal of full-employment became less self-evident (Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1994; Rifkin, 1995). Many people become unemployed or retired early, only to discover that a job is more than a means of obtaining needed or desired goods and services; it is also a

means of participating in social life. Employment provides opportunities for development, status, social contacts and a meaningful use of available time. These opportunities apply to both paid and unpaid work (CRM, 1982; RMO, 2008, 62). In the Netherlands in the late 1970s, these opportunities increased interest in volunteering amongst people who were unemployed, disabled or in early retirement plans. Many of these people (especially recent graduates and women searching for a place on the labour market) began to seek volunteer work that would offer opportunities to acquire or maintain professional skills in order to increase their chances for paid employment.

Voluntary agencies, volunteer centres and social-benefit agencies reacted ambiguously or even negatively to this interest. Professionals and unions in the Dutch nonprofit sector expressed fears that 'unemployed volunteers' would generate unfair competition, amateurism and a loss of employment (*Volkskrant*, 1976; Renooy and Straten, 1989; Bosselaar, 1994). In an annual report from 1977, the Arnhem Volunteer Centre<sup>101</sup> mentions the internal debate concerning the appropriate response to this unexpected interest in volunteering. This discussion involved fundamental issues (e.g. 'which types of labour should be compensated'), as well as practical aspects involved in meeting the special demand for volunteer activities that could be performed during the daytime, for several days each week, with a preference for activities that offer a perspective on or the possibility to qualify for paid employment (Textbox 35). In the Netherlands the same discussion is returning in 2014 (Witteaman, 2014).

Textbox 35: 'The demands of the unemployed volunteer' (WRR, 1981)

*'This involves an increasing number of people – some of whom are entitled to benefits, others who are homemakers who cannot find appropriate paid employment– who actually wish to find paid employment but who cannot, due to insufficient education or structural unemployment. Some of these people choose to volunteer, while others engage in activities that neither they nor society considers as volunteer work. This category refers to small-scale initiatives (e.g. those involving recycling, soft technology, environment, alternative agriculture and horticulture and the revival of traditional crafts) in which people participate while retaining their unemployment benefits. People who have completed a professional education but who cannot find paid employment are also engaging in unpaid activities within their professional areas'.*

In the early 1980s, people in areas of high unemployment and low income began to exchange goods and services with 'green dollars'. In Canada, a *Local Trading System* emerged on Vancouver Island. In Edinburgh, Scotland, *Tit for Tat* emerged around the same time, and 'networks for mutual development and collective approach of problems' appeared in Evry, France (Ruiter, 1989, 13). In the Netherlands, where local trading systems (*Ruieldiensten*) flourished as well, dozens of 'guild projects' (*Gildeprojecten*) provided channels through which people in early retirement made their (professional) skills and life experiences freely available to anyone who was interested (Ruiter, 1989). All of these activities can be defined as volunteering or unpaid work. In this context, unemployed people in the Netherlands can initiate a variety of social enterprises (e.g. shops specialised in recycled goods, Third World products, feminist books or biodynamic products; projects for odd jobs or landscape conservation) while retaining their unemployment benefits. This has raised a fundamental question regarding the social security system in the Netherlands: does the national law allow 'work while retaining an unemployment benefit'? (CRM, 1982; Renooy and Straten, 1989; Bosselaar, 1994; Section 6.1.3.2).

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<sup>101</sup> *Vrijwilligerscentrale Arnhem*

Since 1981, the British government established different programmes for involving unemployed people in volunteering. The *Community Enterprise Programme* employed unemployed people as volunteer organisers and *Opportunities for Volunteering* aimed to encourage the participation of unemployed people in the field of health and social services. The *Voluntary Projects Programme* had a narrower focus, providing volunteers with opportunities and training geared to improving their chances of obtaining paid employment (Zimmeck, 2010, 89). When employment increased again in the mid-1990s, many of these initiatives disappeared or transformed in subsidised citizen work projects (explained in more detail below), thereby losing their voluntary character.

In Germany, although the social security system allows little room for 'work while retaining unemployment benefit', about 1000 unemployment projects exist to care for and protect the interests of unemployed people. The commitment of unemployed people to these projects, however, is very weak (Enquete-Kommission, 2002, 437). The first legal provisions to allow for the civil and volunteer involvement of unemployed people in Germany were the Law for the Integration and Participation of Handicapped Persons<sup>102</sup> and the Law for the Reform of the Labour Market Policy Instruments,<sup>103</sup> both passed in 2001 (Martenson, 2005). In both Germany (Working Opportunities, 2014) and the Netherlands (Gemeente Arnhem, 2009), social-service agencies have developed a hybrid form of citizen/volunteer work for their clients through the One Euro Job programme: in addition to their social benefits, programme participants receive one euro for each hour they volunteer. In the Netherlands, the maximum that can be earned in one year is €900.

One of the fundamental issues in discussions concerning this type of programme involves whether volunteering should be used as an instrument for solving societal problems (Jakob 1999; in response to Beck, 1996; 1999). Rifkin (2004) and Beck (1996; 1999) propose allocating unused labour (due to unemployment) to perform productive work for the community. Against the background of increasing unemployment, in 1995 the presidents of Bavaria and Saxony in Germany requested Beck to advice about the future organisation of work. Beck (1996; 1999) created the concept of public or citizen work (*Bürgerarbeit*), which refers to voluntary social work, conducted under the direction of a community-oriented NPO, with local authorities offering immaterial awards and 'favour credits'. These credits offer access to other communal services and, if needed, a basic citizen's dividend (*Bürgergeld*). By engaging in recognised forms of volunteering, individuals can gain the status of citizen workers, which is superior to being unemployed.

In 1995, Rifkin expecting that information technology should eliminate millions of jobs in the market economy and public sector, announced in his book 'The End of Work' (Rifkin, 2004, [1995]) a worldwide increase of unemployment. To prevent a future situation where there is not enough meaningful work for all, he presents some policy options for governments, such as a shorter, 30-hour work week, a guaranteed annual income with the obligation to work for welfare and a revised tax system that allows deductions (*shadow wages*: Rifkin, 2004, 256) for time spent in NPOs. Especially this latter option he considers as attractive, because this 'third sector' – discerned from the private sector (first sector) and government (second sector) - offers a meaningful occupation to millions and fits with the American tradition of volunteerism and philanthropy (Rifkin, 2004, 256).

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<sup>102</sup> *Gesetz zur Rehabilitation und Teilhabe behinderter Menschen*

<sup>103</sup> *Job-AQTIV-Gesetz*

These initiatives represent an innovative manner of addressing the problem of integration under conditions of shrinking paid employment (Hilger, 2005b). According to Jakob (1999, 51), the approaches of both Beck and Rifkin threaten the very character of volunteer involvement, which is, by definition, performed free of charge, without remuneration and as the result of free choice. In Germany, initiatives that link civic involvement to unemployment appear to form a minefield of conflicting interests: what is in the interest of the labour market is not necessarily in the interest of volunteer involvement (Enquete-Kommission, 2002, 441).

Rochester and colleagues (2010, 206) also argue that the encroachment of the state and its agencies can threaten the autonomy of volunteering. They identify four ways in which governments can undermine the independence of voluntary action:

- Introducing compulsion;
- Developing government-sponsored volunteering;
- Seeking to set the agenda for voluntary action;
- Creating the environment within voluntary action takes place.

Hustinx and colleagues (2009, 257) introduce the term 'guided volunteering' to refer to these less voluntary forms of volunteering. Hustinx (2008, 6) observes that 'new institutional strategies to engineer, harness or resuscitate volunteering' through third-party involvement (e.g. governments, housing corporations and institutions of higher education) can 'manipulate the components of "free choice" and "non-remuneration" that are deeply ingrained in our conventional understanding of volunteering' (Hustinx, 2008, 6). Elements of the ideas and programmes mentioned above can be identified in programmes for social inclusion, participation and integration. For some people, increasing professional demands, the shortage of appropriate vacancies, insufficient command of language or personal restrictions can create insurmountable obstacles to participation in the labour market. Social or psychiatric problems, disabilities, addiction, divorce or the loss of work or a partner can remove these or other people from the social networks of which they were previously a part. Many people in such circumstances are dependent on social benefits. In order to protect them from social exclusion and to stimulate their participation in work and community, some governments enable special programmes involving or closely related to volunteer work.

The concept of social inclusion has grown out of concern over poverty, marginalization and other forms of deprivation. Social inclusion places people at the center of policymaking. Its ultimate goal is to enable them to improve their own lives through the realization of opportunities. [...] It is also a normative concept that places emphasis on the right of individuals to participate in the life of their communities (UNV, 2011a, 52).

In the Netherlands, local social-service agencies have been supporting social-activation programmes (*sociale activering*) since 1996 (Pennens, 2003b). Volunteer centres play an important role in the operation of these programmes. At the individual level, they help participants to discover their capacities, offer volunteer opportunities in which these capacities are needed; participants also receive support in carrying out the selected volunteer work properly and independently. Approximately 60% of participants in social-activation programmes eventually become volunteers, and 10% even move on to jobs or educational programmes (Vlaar and Keesom, 1997). The literature shows that volunteer

work helps to develop empowerment on the part of volunteers (Cohen, 2009; Kampen, 2010, 41). Immigrants and asylum seekers can use volunteering to improve their command of language and to assist in the naturalisation process. Inclusion or activation programmes are based on the specific competencies that individuals have to offer. Special counsellors help to determine these competences and look for appropriate voluntary activities that draw upon these competencies.

Since 2004, the British government has followed a Public Service Agreement (PSA), with the goal of increasing the inclusiveness of volunteering amongst those at risk of social exclusion. This agreement involves such programmes as 'Volunteering for All' and 'Gold Star', (Rochester and colleagues, 2010, 190). In his list of key challenges for the British government in 2006, former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair included the need to 'increase overall levels of volunteering across all age ranges and backgrounds', with a specific reference to greater involvement 'amongst those at risk of social exclusion including people with no qualifications, people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities and people with disabilities or limiting long-term illnesses' (Rochester and colleagues, 2010, 2). The 'Access to Volunteering Scheme' is intended to provide funding for 'reasonable adjustments' that make volunteering better accessible particularly for disabled people (Rochester and colleagues 2010, 190). For the British government, the drive to increase participation in volunteering is a part of the public service renewal and active citizen agendas. 'Volunteering is seen as a useful mechanism to help tackle social exclusion, particularly by providing a stepping stone to employment' (Rochester and colleagues 2010, 200). 'Moreover, volunteering can reduce the social exclusion that is often the result of poverty, marginalization and other forms of inequality. Volunteerism is one path to inclusion among population groups that are often excluded such as women, young and older people, people with disabilities, migrants and people living with HIV/AIDS' (UNV, 2011a, xxii).

With reference to Social Origin Theory (Salamon and Anheier, 1998), social democratic and corporatist regimes that advocate for the social inclusion and social participation of all citizens – particularly those with social, physical, psychiatric and mental limitations – are likely to view volunteering from this perspective. The governments of England, Germany and the Netherlands are particularly likely to support the economic perspective on volunteering.

#### *6.4.2.2 The interests of NPOs*

The counselling services that NPOs must provide to participants of activation or inclusion programmes are often long-term and therefore expensive. It is not in the direct interest of NPOs to invest in these programmes. The involvement of this type of volunteer can place great demands on an organisation in terms of the quality and continuity of the services that are to be provided, the position of clients, the special coaching that is needed or tensions that can arise on the shop-floor between traditional and 'new' volunteers (RMO, 1997). In broad terms, organisations are interested in recruiting, selecting, training and retaining the best possible volunteers at the lowest possible cost. They are willing to offer volunteering opportunities for activation programmes on the condition that the external party pays for or performs the extra counselling that these 'special volunteers' need. Programmes that stimulate social inclusion, participation or integration are fundamentally different from 'guided volunteering' (as described in Section 6.4.2.1) in that, instead of compelling, they invite and empower people to participate in volunteering.

Not all of the effects of programmes arising out of the economic perspective on volunteering are burdensome for NPOs. Such programmes can help people who are not likely to volunteer spontaneously to discover the inherent value of volunteer work, transforming them into valuable assets for the organisation. The group of employees in pre-retirement programmes makes an especially significant contribution to volunteering (Davis Smith and Gay, 2005; Tang, Morrow-Howell and Hong, 2009; Zimmeck, 2010).

The impact of volunteering on the economy is not one-sided; the economy influences volunteering as well. The proposed responses of Beck (1994) and Rifkin (1995) to the deteriorating ideal of full-employment by allocating unused labour due to unemployment to performing productive work for the community (Section 6.3.2.1) generated an influx of new volunteers, which benefited NPOs. At another point, a movement in the opposite direction emerged. When the labour supply is low, women are stimulated to enter the labour market, young people are encouraged to combine their studies with paid jobs and raising the retirement age becomes open to discussion. All of these responses decrease the amount of time that is available for volunteering.

The relationship between income and volunteering is another example of how the economy can affect volunteering. There are two prominent lines of thought regarding this issue. First, volunteer work is assumed to impose costs in the form of foregone wages due to the hours spent not working for pay: the higher a person's wages are, the higher the costs of volunteering will be for that person (Romero, 1986, 31). Second, volunteering may be seen as an unpaid productive activity that is costly to perform. According to one study (Profile of Illinois, 2001), 18% of Illinois residents explained their level of involvement in their communities by saying that they could not afford the money required to be more involved. For people with low incomes, the costs of decent clothing, travel expenses and hosting meetings at home can be a reason for not volunteering (Reitsma-Street, Maczwesci and Neysmith, 2000, 10). In this respect, the interest in volunteer involvement in the delivery of services (consistent with the welfare perspective) appears to have lower priority than does the interest in economic development.

#### 6.4.2.3 *The interests of volunteers*

From the economic perspective on volunteering, motivations oriented towards the functional categories of *enhancement*, *career* and *protection* are particularly relevant (Section 6.1.3, Textbox 30). Hilger (2005b, Table 20) mentions 'material benefit' as a central motive. Volunteers who approach their activities from the economic perspective aim to achieve personal development and participation in work, whether paid or unpaid. They use volunteering as a means of fostering their own personal development and integration. The inclusive and expressive character of the economic perspective on volunteering is based on the belief that every person has talents. This suggests that the assets and capacities of a prospective volunteer should be determined first, after which appropriate tasks and organisations should be selected to match these assets and capacities (Kampen, 2010, 55). This approach is opposite to that suggested by the welfare perspective, in which volunteers are selected according to their appropriateness for the job.

#### 6.4.2.4 *The interests of third parties*

In times of high unemployment, employers facing a choice between applicants without work experience can consider the competencies that applicants have acquired through volunteering. Human resource management acknowledges the value of such competen-

cies for paid positions. This fact draws many graduates into volunteering. In the Netherlands, Amnesty International, Green Peace, Aid to Refugees, Law Centres, Research Information Centres and other NGOs that offer highly educated but unemployed people opportunities to maintain their professional knowledge and skills and to strengthen their *curriculum vitae*, took advantage of the temporary supply of such qualified volunteers during the 1990s. The 'accreditation of prior learning' (Textbox 36) can help unemployed people whose educational careers are inadequate or incomplete but who do have volunteering experience to equate the competencies they have acquired through their volunteering to those acquired in formal learning situations. In this way, volunteering can contribute to participation in work and education.

Textbox 36: Accreditation of prior learning (Kenniscentrum, 2009).

*'Accreditation of prior learning (APL) is the common name given to the process of recognising the competences an individual has gained through formal, informal or non-formal learning in various settings. This implies that professional competences acquired by learning on the job, in a home setting or in voluntary work are in principle comparable to those acquired in formal learning situations. Moreover, competences include more than knowledge, skills and attitude. They also implicitly refer to the talent to adjust to changing circumstances, flexibility or deployment potential. Therefore, competences not only include professional competences but social and personal competences as well. Recognition means awarding certificates or diplomas on the basis of a generally recognised standard, such as the qualification structure for vocational education. Obviously, there are also other standards relating to the labour market which employers and employees regard as relevant. External legitimacy is the key requirement for recognition.'*

Many companies express their social involvement through corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes. Employee volunteering can be a part of such programmes (Meijs and Voort, 2009). Communities and NPOs can take advantage of corporate volunteering, as can the companies themselves. Corporate volunteering offers companies opportunities for teambuilding, developing special employee competencies, access to commercially interesting networks and gaining a positive social image. Research in the Netherlands (Zonderop, 2004) shows that volunteering employees have a more positive attitude towards life, feel more responsibility, perform better and contribute more positively to the reputations of their companies. Reputation enhancement can help to attract new customers, as well as new employees (Dekker and Seters, 2008, 13). Educational, social inclusion, integration, rehabilitation and therapy programmes are also consistent with the economic perspective on volunteering (Section 6.4.2.1).

### **6.4.3 Relationship between volunteers and organisations**

#### **6.4.3.1 Volunteer management**

From the economic perspective, the individual development of the volunteer comes first. Membership management is more appropriate to this view than is programme management, as it focuses on the volunteers themselves and involves assigning appropriate tasks that match with the capacities, assets and preferences of volunteers. Although service-delivery organisations offer the most attractive environment for carrying out programmes for personal development and social participation, programme management is the standard in these types of organisations. This context therefore calls for a combination of programme and membership management, with special attention to empowerment. This poses a challenge for volunteer administrators, and requires special skills, additional time for counselling and the willingness of the organisation to contribute to the implementation of such developmental programmes.

#### *6.4.3.2 The position of paid staff in the relation to volunteers*

The complexity of the economic perspective for volunteer administrators is discussed in Section 6.4.3.1. The economic perspective on volunteering has consequences for other staff as well. In the workplace, employees and 'regular' volunteers may experience that volunteers who are participating through developmental programmes are limited and in need of special counselling and support, and that their motivations for volunteering differ from those of the 'regular' volunteers. The efforts of the 'developmental programme' volunteers are aimed primarily at their own personal development; the goals of the organisation are thus relegated to second place. In this sense, such volunteers are actually 'using' the organisation for personal goals. They ask for flexibility in job descriptions. They may feel that they are above performing certain tasks, and others may want more than the organisation can provide, particularly those who are volunteering for career reasons. Such career-oriented volunteers may start to identify more with the paid staff members than with the volunteers. If they feel less obliged to uphold the existing boundaries between the work of paid staff and that of volunteers, their function could shift from volunteer to a type of trainee. It is important to recognise such ambitions in time in order to identify prospective employees and avoid conflicts between volunteers and paid staff.

#### *6.4.3.3 The character of volunteering*

As stated above, the economic perspective on volunteering has an inclusive character. In this view, everyone should be included – from people with special needs and restrictions, who have few prospects on the labour market to promising young professionals engaged in employee volunteering programmes. This perspective is also expressive, as it assumes the goal of developing and strengthening people's capacities and assets. The economic perspective does not focus on the inherent value of volunteering, emphasising instead the ways in which individuals can use volunteering for their own purposes. In this respect, the economic perspective also has an instrumental character. The commitment of volunteers to the goals of their organisations is low, as is their need to influence organisational policies.

## **6.5 The community perspective**

### **6.5.1 Introduction**

'Volunteerism is one way for people to engage in the life of their communities and societies. In doing so, they acquire a sense of belonging and inclusion and they are able to influence the direction of their lives' (UNV, 2011a, xxi). The community perspective on volunteering focuses on the potential of volunteering and civic engagement to enhance close neighbourhood relations and trust, ultimately building social capital. In drawing a distinction between social capital and economic or cultural capital, Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, 119), define social capital as 'the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition'. According to Putnam (2000, 19; UNV, 2011a, 41), 'social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks – and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them'. As observed by Dekker (1999, 21): 'According to Putnam social capital is a



complex of social characteristics that contributes to removing obstacles for collective action and to promoting cooperation for mutual benefit' (Dekker, 1999, 21). Brehm and Rahn (1997, 1000) consider social capital 'an aggregate concept that has its basis in individual behaviour, attitudes, and predispositions. Multiple institutions nurture the habits and values that give rise to social capital, including community and other voluntary associations, families, church organisations, and cultural patterns'. In an essay entitled *The Gift: Gift-giving as a means to consolidate reciprocity*, Mauss (1954) elaborates on the principle of reciprocity, an essential element of social capital. The essay considers the practices of gift-giving in non-European societies, although it also refers to traces of gift exchange in European societies. The findings reported by Mauss support the community perspective on volunteering. The community perspective emphasises the contribution of volunteering in strengthening communities and focuses on 'doing with' in contrast to 'doing for', which is more characteristic of the welfare perspective, and not part of the definition of social capital (Putnam, 2000, 117).

According to Hilger (2006a, 6) 'doing with' can be further specified as engagement that is rooted in the social milieu ('belonging to') or organisational affiliation ('membership') and engagement that is based on reciprocity. Engagement based on social milieu and organisational affiliation is often considered an implicit duty, having lost significance in favour of 'new' engagement based on reciprocity. 'Citizens do not only serve but also expect to gain from their engagement. Reference to own wishes, needs and desires may be immaterial as in the case of self-realisation and self-determination or quasi material as in the case of small compensations, access to support networks, qualification and reputation' (Hilger, 2006a, 7). It is actually a transformation from a collective to a reflexive style of volunteering (Section 3.1.1)

Support for the community perspective on volunteering can also be found in communitarism, a school of thought in political and social philosophy that stresses the individual's dependency on communities. According to Etzioni (2005 [1996]), communitarism:

[...] recognises the need for social bonds as part of the effort to maintain a social order, thereby preventing that such bonds suppress autonomous expressions. A good society does not favour social welfare above individual choices and vice versa; it favours social formations which promote these two social virtues in a careful balance (Etzioni, 2005 [1996], 44).

Etzioni (2005 [1996], 44) distinguishes the 'highly acclaimed voluntary associations, with their weak binding capacity' from 'communities, with their stronger interpersonal bonds'. This view resembles with the lifeworld/system distinction developed by Habermas' (1981), who defines institutions and structures developed by humans in the areas of economy, politics, education, health and science as the system. In this view, the private domain lies outside the system; the domain in which people interact with each other is known as the lifeworld. This definition of the system is arguably more applicable to the welfare perspective on volunteering, while the definition of the lifeworld is more consistent with the community perspective. That communitarians have a special affinity with the lifeworld can be deduced from Walzer (1991), another communitarian, who introduces the notion of 'sociability' to express the communitarian vision on civil society as:

[...] people freely associating and communicating with one another, forming and reforming groups of all sorts, not for the sake of any particular formation

– family, tribe, nation, religion, commune, brotherhood or sisterhood, interest group or ideological movement – but for the sake of sociability itself. For we are by nature social, before we are political or economic beings (Walzer, 1991, 298).

Support for the community perspective can also be found in the work of Ostrom (1990), who examines the development of a broader theory of institutional arrangements related to the effective governance and management of common-pool resources (CPRs). These arrangements are necessary in order to resolve three CPR dilemmas: Hardin’s tragedy of the commons, the prisoner’s dilemma game and Olson’s logic of collective action (Ostrom, 1990, 182). In a study on the behaviour of appropriators in smaller-scale CPRs, Ostrom observes that:

[...] in such situations individuals repeatedly communicate and interact with one another in a localized physical setting. Thus, it is possible that they can learn whom to trust, what effects their actions will have on each other and on the CPR, and how to organize themselves to gain benefits and avoid harm. When individuals have lived in such situations for a substantial time and have developed shared norms and patterns of reciprocity, they possess social capital with which they can build institutional arrangements for resolving CPR dilemmas (Ostrom, 1990, 183).

Following the definition of volunteering as ‘unpaid work for an organisation’, Musick and Wilson (2008, 13) consider the inclusion of certain elements of the community perspective (e.g. active membership in associations and participation in self-help networks and such informal activities as neighbourhood help) in the definition of volunteering as arbitrary. Their definition of volunteering thus focuses especially on organised civic engagement within the system, and it excludes the more informal civic engagement that takes place in the lifeworld. With regard to members, Musick and Wilson state that active membership in voluntary organisations does not necessarily lead to volunteering. Within the category of members, they distinguish between consumers and producers of ‘the public good’. They find that joiners tend to be volunteers, but that by no means all joiners actually volunteer. Hutchison and Ockenden (2008, 7) use a broader definition of volunteering within community-based organisations, that include both formal (inside the system) and informal volunteering (inside the lifeworld)<sup>104</sup>. Following this definition, they consider community-based organisations without reservation as an important locus for volunteering. This broader definition of volunteering is reflected in the local volunteering infrastructure in Denmark, Norway, Italy and Germany (Textbox 37).

Textbox 37: Local evidence of a broader definition of volunteering

*As evidence of the broader definition of volunteering, serve volunteer centres in Denmark (Ministry of Social Affairs Denmark, 2001), Norway (Lorentzen and Dugstad, 2008, 13) and Italy (Paganin, 2001). The volunteer centres in these countries distinguish themselves from their counterparts in other countries through their specially appointed task of offering support to small local associations, helping citizens launch new activities and assisting the initiators of self-help groups. In Germany, the volunteering infrastructure performs a similar func-*

<sup>104</sup> Informal volunteering includes ‘giving unpaid help as an individual to someone who is not a relative’. This is according to the broad definition of volunteering set out in The Volunteering Compact Code of Good Practice: ‘Volunteering is an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups other than (or in addition to) close relatives’ (Hutchison and Ockenden, 2008, 11).

tion through its network of about 160 local self-help meeting points (*Selbsthilfekontaktstellen*), which are professional agencies that make meeting space, support and services available to self-help groups. They are a resource for general information about self-help, and they assist the initiators of new groups (Enquete-Kommission, 2002, 298).

The community perspective expands the traditional notion of volunteering to include what is expressed in the term 'volunteer effort' (Section 3.2). In this context Hilger (2006a, 5) is followed, by including both organised and informal forms of voluntary activity that reflect civic engagement in the definition of volunteering, as this study investigates the ways in which public policies on volunteering affect NPOs and influence their expectations of the volunteering infrastructure.

Putnam (1993, 90) assumes coherence between behaviour and attitudes in social, political and economic life. This coherence has been criticised by a number of social scientists. For example, Dekker (1999, 21) argues that, although volunteer work and active membership in associations create networks and norms while stimulating trust, we also can consider volunteer work and active membership as arising from networks and stimulated by norms and trust. The empirically demonstrated over-representation of religious people and those with higher levels of education amongst the most politically and socially active population (Deth and Leijenaar, 1994, 61) provides evidence to support this criticism. A greater number of social scientists concur that social trust, faith in people and interpersonal trust enhance participation in voluntary organisations (Almond and Verba, 1989; Inglehart, 1990). Trust and engagement are two facets of the same underlying factor: social capital. Brehm and Rahn (1997) provide empirical support for the mutual relation between trust and engagement.

According to Ernsting (Boer, 2000, 13) social capital is developed and consumed within social networks. People who are excluded from social networks lack the opportunity to contribute to or take advantage of social capital. Ernsting defines this phenomenon as the *Matteus Effect*: socially weak people are less likely to participate in informal 'giving-networks', and they are less likely to receive informal care than are socially strong people, who usually have at least some form of social capital at their disposal. Work (whether paid or unpaid) appears to be an important means of acquiring networks. As mentioned in Section 6.4.2.3, since the mid-1990s, social-service agencies in the Netherlands have been using volunteering to activate social participation amongst unemployed clients facing insurmountable obstacles to participating in the labour market. Volunteer centres act as intermediaries, helping clients find volunteer jobs that will facilitate their entry into social networks (Pennens, 2003b; Section 6.4.2.3).

Although social capital is considered a positive feature of a complete society, Dekker (1999) refers to the social costs of mutual trust and close networks at the micro and meso levels: 'social capital is distributed unequally, is used for undesired targets (mafia), stimulates conformism and obstructs individual initiative; social capital offers benefits because other individuals and groups have less or less valuable networks available' (Dekker, 1999, 22).

## **6.5.2 Interests of various parties according to the community perspective**

### **6.5.2.1 The interests of government**

*Renewal of civil society:* According to Coleman (1988), social capital includes obligations and expectations, trust, information potential, norms and effective sanctions, authority relations, social organisations and social networks. Obligations and expectations suppose mutuality, a base of trust and the certainty that the trust that is given will not be breached. Social capital is thus difficult to build within an anonymous and fragmented social context. The knowledge that volunteering offers fertile soil for the growth of social capital (Dörner and Vogt, 1999; Dekker, 1999) could explain the development of public policies aiming to promote and support volunteering. From this perspective, active citizenship is synonymous with volunteering (Textbox 38).

Textbox 38: Renewal of civil society

*'The renewal of civil society through the development of strong, active and empowered communities, in which people are able to do things for themselves, define the problems they face and tackle them in partnership with public bodies. Civil renewal involves three essential elements: active citizenship, strengthened communities and partnership in meeting public needs. Its practical process is community engagement'* (Home Office, 2004, 14).

In an analysis of contemporary British society, Blond (2010) notes that elements that are considered essential to the renewal of civil society were once present in working-class communities, but they were later denied and destroyed by the British government in the process of building the welfare state:

This new configuration of (welfare) state and citizen made the populace a supplicant citizenry dependent on the state rather than themselves, and it aborted indigenous traditions of working-class self-help, mutuality and social insurance. Rather than working with one another in order to change their situation on their locality, relying on the welfare state only to get them through a temporary rough path, some working-class people increasingly became passive recipients of centrally determined benefits (Blond, 2010, 15).

Historically, relativistic value systems have been resisted by the working class, for whom the mutualism of society, community and family has been more than a matter of convenience. While properly functioning networks of community support improve the lives of all members of society, for the poorest and most vulnerable members of society, relationships and norms of conduct and generalised reciprocity provide irreplaceable social safety nets (Blond, 2010, 76).

With reference to the lifeworld/system distinction proposed by Habermas' (1981; Section 6.5.1), one could say that according to Blond's observation the balance between lifeworld and system has been disturbed at the expense of the lifeworld.

*Safe communities:* With reference to Blond (2010, 76), the sense of insecurity felt in many communities appears to be associated with the absence of networks that produce trust. When social networks decrease, social contacts between people, social control and the sense of collective responsibility for the neighbourhood disappear. Strengthening the sense of security appears to demand the presence of social capital (Coleman, 1988; de Hart, 2002; WRR, 2005; Schnabel, Bijl and Hart, 2008). Putnam (2000, 22) distinguishes

bonding social capital from social capital that bridges communities. This distinction is relevant for policies that are intended to promote civic involvement and civic renewal. Bonding social capital, which focuses on internal cohesion within groups, creates conditions for bridging social capital, which is directed towards external cohesion and which emerges when people step out of their own groups to approach 'strangers' (SCP, 2008, 16). An excessive level of social cohesion within a group, however, can interfere with bridging social capital (Dekker, 1999, 22). Volunteer involvement contributes to both bonding and bridging social capital; it enhances networks, promotes integration and prevents the social isolation of citizens who have no networks (Dörner and Vogt, 1999, 32). People who volunteer are more trusting of people in their neighbourhoods and more willing to help each other than are those who do not volunteer. Similarly, volunteering can provide new ways of engaging in political processes (Dekker, 1999, 250; Hutchison and Ockenden, 2008, 17).

*'Joint production'*<sup>105</sup>: Governments in the UK (Penberthy, 2004), Germany (Enquete-Kommission, 2002), the Netherlands (WRR, 2005; WMO, 2006), Norway (Lorentzen, 2005), Denmark (Denmark Ministry of Social Affairs, 2001) and other countries have formulated policies to enhance social cohesion and civil involvement. These policies acknowledge the influence of the social and physical environments in which people live on the development of social cohesion and social capital. A house alone is not sufficient for living. People must also feel at home and secure in their neighbourhoods. It is therefore important that they know – and are known by – their neighbours. They must have the opportunity to meet their neighbours, the facilities to organise activities and the means with which to influence the social and physical development of their neighbourhoods (Kietzell, 1999). According to Frieling (2008, 181) the enhancement of active citizenship in neighbourhoods calls for civic involvement in policy development, as well as for involvement in the performance and evaluation of these policies. Frieling (2008) proposes a dialogue between the neighbourhood, professionals and the local government, focusing on the joint production of policies. Civil involvement calls for changes in the distribution of responsibilities between government, professionals and citizens. As consumers, citizens criticise government policies; as co-producers, they have a voice in the realisation of policy and can ultimately participate in the implementation and evaluation of policy (RMO, 2000a).

*Social capital and Welfare Reform*: The 1996 US Welfare Reform Legislation aims to move large numbers of people on public assistance from welfare to permanent work that pays wages sufficient to support a family. This legislation has generated a host of programmes and services invented to help people locate jobs. Schneider (2006, 3) examines these programmes and services in order to investigate why some families within a community can be successful in achieving their goals in the areas of education, work and lifestyle goals while others fail. The study reveals the crucial role that social capital plays in this context:

Social capital makes a difference on all levels, Government that develops trust-based relationships with local service providers develops more sensitive strategies and is able to more quickly adjust programs to meet unanticipated situations. Organizations with strong social capital links to other organiza-

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<sup>105</sup> Joint production, which has been defined as 'the simultaneous production of two or more goods from the same resource', is a key concept in a dissertation by Frieling (2008).

tions, government, and their participants are better equipped to obtain and manage contracts, provide a richer range of services for their program participants, and offer higher-quality service. Faith communities foster social capital and community, providing important resources to their members and the wider society. In some cases, congregations become centres to develop bridging social capital and social change initiatives. Families with divergent social networks have very different employment outcomes despite common efforts to improve human capital. Despite this predominance of social capital as an element in social welfare systems, it receives the least attention in policy strategies. Policy makers would do well to build policy factors into policy factors that encourage social capital development. At an institutional level, including social capital as an aspect of policy implementation means fostering partnerships rather than market competition among providers (Schneider, 2006, 357).

*Capacity-oriented volunteering policy:* Volunteering policies that are directed towards enhancing social cohesion in neighbourhoods share the common feature of proceeding from the assets and capacities that are already present in the neighbourhood (UNV, 2011a, 49). These types of policies are discussed in relation to the democratic perspective in Section 6.3.3.2. The previously mentioned ABCD method (ABCD, 2009) developed by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) has been a source of inspiration for capacity-oriented methods of volunteer involvement in communities (Bos, 2007; Frieling, 2008, 182; Brudney and Vogelsang-Comb, 2008; Davelaar and Veldboer, 2008). In the Netherlands, the neighbourhood approach merges community care with community development and emphasises civic participation and activation. Governmental policy aims to reinforce neighbourhoods, informal networks and civic effort. The ideal is an intelligent, interwoven network of informal care, voluntary work and civic participation, supplemented and supported by professional services (Ewijk, 2006). In the Netherlands, this line of thought has been supported and elaborated by Lans (2010), Linders (2010, 203) and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (Ministerie van VWS, 2011).

*'What inspires citizens to involvement as volunteers'*<sup>106</sup>: Both governments and NPOs that are favourably disposed towards civil or social involvement must create conditions that challenge citizens, businesses, schools and service clubs to express their civic involvement. For example, businesses may develop employer-supported volunteering programmes, schools may adopt initiatives in service learning and service clubs may engage in community service projects. In this context, the notion of 'volunteer effort' is better suited than the traditional 'volunteer work' to reflect the diversity of this wide range of civic or social involvement. Factors that various researchers (e.g. Putnam and colleagues 2003, 273; Hurenkamp and colleagues 2006; Section 6.2.1) have identified as contributing to the success of civic involvement include governmental appreciation, commitment and support facilities. Tonkens (2007) refers to a government that challenges civic involvement as 'an inviting, bonding government'. This type of government is set against the backdrop of two other types that have been prominent in the Netherlands in recent decades: the 'caring and assuring government' and the 'withdrawing government'. The latter two types are more consistent with the welfare perspective.

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<sup>106</sup> This is the title of a Dutch study of citizen initiatives (Hurenkamp and colleagues, 2006)

According to Duyvendak and Veldboer (2003, 7), governments and NPOs are not always successful in taking advantage of the unique dynamics of citizens. On the one hand, there is little support for civic initiatives that are inconsistent with the policies of the government or NPOs. Examples include civic initiatives opposing traffic regulations, activist organisations discussing environmental policies or residents protesting the establishment of a homeless shelter in their neighbourhood. On the other hand, the support for successful civic initiatives may become so massive (some are even taken over by professionals) that citizens lose ownership and interest in their own initiatives. As noted before in Section 6.4.1, in many initiatives started by volunteers, paid staff have restricted and formalised or even taken over the tasks and responsibilities of volunteers. For example, this has occurred in the Netherlands with regard to playgroups for children, literacy projects for immigrants and projects offering assistance to crime victims. Meijs and Delleman (2006) warn against such co-optation within neighbourhood mediation projects. Civic engagement and ownership are not the primary concerns of the recent governmental trend in the Netherlands to hold initiative accountable for their 'products and performance'. This focus on accountability, which results in businesslike approaches and production agreements, can expropriate civic engagement (Duyvendak and Veldboer, 2003; Lans, 2010; Blond, 2010).

*'Loose connections'*<sup>107</sup>: Despite declines in active association membership (Putnam, 2000) and active citizenship, Dekker (2005, 11) observes that:

[T]he welfare state provides new bases for voluntary work: the school playground, the care home and the neighbourhood centre as meeting places for citizens and as opportunities to develop civic engagement. In this modern voluntary work the ties are looser, more functional, and more open to strangers. This is a gain in a modern society where it is so important to build bridges between groups with different cultures, ideologies, and lifestyles. Voluntary work may well be the ideal medium for binding together a modern society in which traditional integrating frameworks have disappeared and people enter into relationships on the basis of common interest of shared aims' (Dekker, 2005, 11).

Dörner and Vogt (1999) confirm this view, stating that volunteer involvement is a particularly important contribution to the social integration of citizens and the development of social capital, given trend in which traditional ties to the community (e.g. through family and religion) are loosening. Wuthnow (1998, 5) describes societal developments that cause the emergence of 'looser' expressions of volunteer effort and new forms of civic participation:

[For] working Americans, the struggle to stay ahead frequently means moving farther away from parents and kin, sinking shallower roots into particular communities, and negotiating compromises with a spouse who has equally demanding employment arrangements. [...] Many Americans are troubled by the lack of communal ties and activities. They are worried that the moral values they wish to communicate to their children cannot be sustained. [...] Some Americans have begun to search for ways to combat their isolation and to connect with neighbours and like-minded people. They are experimenting

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<sup>107</sup> This is the title of a publication by Wuthnow (1998).

with looser more sporadic, ad hoc connections in place of the long-term memberships in hierarchical organisations of the past. [...] [F]ragmented communities increase the need for people to seek intentional relationships with others, and these relationships can lead to innovative forms of civic participation.

Wuthnow observes that thousands of community groups are searching and finding new ways to enlist people who may not have the time or the inclination to participate in more established organisations. Putnam and Feldstein (2003) identify a variety of ways in which these new forms of civic participation can be manifested: within libraries, churches, schools, neighbourhoods, activist organisations and art projects. These initiatives have in common 'that they all involve making connections among people, establishing bonds of trust and understanding, building community' (Putnam and Feldstein, 2003, 1; Berg, Houwelingen and Hart, 2011).

In the Netherlands, a number of volunteer initiatives that have emerged in the past decade express a new type of solidarity. Examples include 'buddy' programmes for AIDS patients, psychiatric clients or people with mental disabilities, Friendly Visiting projects, volunteer coaching services for ex-prisoners and neighbourhood mediation. These new types of volunteer work are characterised by reciprocity, equality ('doing with') and the possibility of performing these activities in a flexible manner and with a strong personal contribution (Galesloot, 2000). In this context, Hustinx (2008, 13) introduces the notion of 'institutionalised individualisation': 'While traditional institutions imposed clear rules and restrictions, modern institutions are offering "incentives for action" instead'.

*Localisation of policies:* Since the 1970s, the national governments of the Netherlands, the UK and Denmark (as well as other countries not included in this study) have gradually shifted the responsibility for care and welfare to the local government. Such localisation is accompanied by territorially oriented policies, in which local authorities determine the provisions that are needed in their respective territories (e.g. in terms of security, education, unemployment, care, permanence, housing construction, environmental planning), as well as how these provisions can reinforce each other. According to Ewijk (2006, 4) this territorial or community approach is a combination of *community care*, as developed in the UK and USA and *community development*, as applied in developing countries. 'The territorial approach is much more a framework for policy, planning and control than it is an appeal to transform the neighbourhood into one big family' (Ewijk, 2006, 5).

With reference to Social Origin Theory (Salamon and Anheier, 1998), social democratic regimes (as in Denmark, Finland and Norway) are likely to support the community perspective, as they attach considerable value to NPOs that express social, political and recreational interests. Corporatist regimes like England, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands are either forced or induced to support NPOs in order 'to retain the support of important social elite' (Salamon and colleagues, 2001, 262) or to build strong communities.

#### 6.5.2.2 *The interests of NPOs*

The community perspective on volunteering focuses on NPOs in which groups of individuals who share a common need or interest join together to provide mutual support, advice and encouragement. Mutual support organisations, which are characterised by social solidarity and camaraderie (e.g. Courtney, 2002, 39; Meijs and Ten Hoorn, 2008, 33),



exist in many sectors, including medicine, psychosocial services, sport, hobby and community development. In most cases, mutual support organisations are grassroots groups (Textbox 39; Smith, 2000). The community perspective on volunteering emphasises that mutual support organisations, which are often evaluated solely according to their directly visible activities, also produce such intrinsic values as social cohesion, trust, social capital, solidarity and reciprocity. These values are considered increasingly important to the development and maintenance of strong and safe communities (Putnam, 1994). Because of their bonding and bridging qualities (Putnam, 2000, 22) mutual support organisations have been gaining governmental recognition and support.

Textbox 39: Basic components of grassroots groups (Scheier, 1992)

- *Directly and immediately responsive to the needs and wishes of the people involved.*
- *The major part of the work is done not only for the people involved but also by them, without paid staff and often without much specialized expertise, either. We're talking about bootstrap operations, here, usually without big budgets or other large resource reservoirs.*
- *Related, these tend to be what have been called 'all-volunteer' or 'mainly volunteer' groups, with certain special characteristics organized volunteerism is just beginning to study.*
- *Grassroots groups tend to operate more informally, with less overt structure as compared to staffed volunteer programs or agencies.*
- *What this usually means is that grassroots groups are almost always local, actually very local, such as the small church, the neighbourhood group or block organization. Wistful insinuations to the contrary, 'National Headquarters' is hardly ever 'grassroots.' Say the same for national consultants and trainers.*

The community perspective on volunteering has special relevance for NPOs that provide support services to vulnerable families. Referring to exhaustive examinations of the effectiveness of all types of therapy McKeown (2000, 10) identifies four factors that are common to the effectiveness of all therapeutic interventions (Textbox 40).

Textbox 40: Factors common to the effectiveness of all therapeutic interventions (McKeown, 11)

- *Client characteristics and support from social networks: 40%*
- *Therapist-client relationship: 30%*
- *Client Hopefulness: 15%*
- *Therapeutic techniques: 15%*

Within the context of the community perspective on volunteering, it is relevant to elaborate on one element of the first success factor: the support provided from social networks. McKeown (2000) considers social support as an important dimension in the lives of all families. Support networks form part of the social capital of individuals and families; like financial, physical and human capital, social capital is essential to survival and success in life. In the context of therapy and family support, McKeown (2000, 13) considers networks important for four reasons:

- They are part of the context and resources within which individuals and families live their lives. These support networks help to maintain the links between individuals and their families and between families and the community through the creation of helpfulness, trust and reciprocity. [...]
- Participation in positive support networks is known to improve physical health and mental health and to aid in recovery from illness and adversity. [...]
- Many vulnerable families are often characterised by the lack of positive supportive social networks. [...]

- Given that the quality of a person's support network can influence the effectiveness of professional interventions, there is a strong case for helping clients to strengthen their informal social support network (McKeown, 2000, 13).

Community foundations constitute another category of NPOs that have a strong interest in and are important to the community perspective on volunteering are the community foundations: local philanthropic organisations that worldwide provide institutional support to identify and coordinate effective solutions to community needs (Garonzik, 1999; Jakob, 2010; Graddy and Wang, 2009). Graddy and Wang (2009, 392) examine the relationship between social capital and the development of community foundations, finding that per capita gifts to community foundations increase with the level of social capital in that community.

#### 6.5.2.3 *The interests of volunteers*

With reference to the six functional categories of volunteer motivation (Section 6.1.4, Textbox 30), all motivational categories are considered relevant to the community perspective, with the exception of career-related motives. Hilger (2005b, 7; Table 20) formulates proximity and 'doing-with' as the central motives from the community perspective. From this perspective, volunteering has an inclusive character. The services that are provided and the activities that are performed express the needs or ideas of members and residents of a community. Mutual support and reciprocity are highly consistent with this perspective.

#### 6.5.2.4 *The interests of third parties*

Agencies and organisations that carry out projects in the areas of social inclusion, empowerment, integration, rehabilitation and therapy are particularly likely to consider volunteering from within the community perspective. From this perspective, volunteering offers clients of such programmes opportunities to join social networks, prevent social exclusion and realise motives, as described above (Section 6.5.2.3). The community perspective is also of value for educational programmes focusing on community service and service learning (Section 6.2.2.4).

Strickland (2010, 253) describes two developments in volunteering and citizenship in England that are relevant to the community perspective and that 'offer new takes on traditional approaches to engaging individuals in community benefit activity'.

- Using volunteering to nurture a new generation of young citizens with such programmes as *National Citizen Service*, *Youth volunteer Force* and *v Talent Year*
- Using volunteering as currency, to pay back a debt to society in the form of judicial community service<sup>108</sup> or to earn a social good. One example of the latter case involves foreign nationals living in the UK, whose volunteering allowed them to receive British citizenship two years earlier than those who do not. Another example involves individuals living in Manchester, whose volunteering activities within their neighbourhoods have qualified them to have priority in obtaining housing (Strickland, 2010, 253).

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<sup>108</sup> If a student is placed on disciplinary probation because of misconduct, assigned work hours are usually imposed. The number of hours of work assigned depends on the severity of the misconduct

Strickland (2010, 254) observes four key trends that underpin these two developments in England:

- 'Rolling forward the state – an increase in state activism;
- Using community benefit activity to develop citizenship;
- Moves towards more coerced activity;
- A growth in interest in structured youth programmes'.

### **6.5.3 Relationship between volunteers and organisations**

#### *6.5.3.1 Volunteer management*

From the community perspective on volunteering, the recruitment of volunteers is likely to be facilitated by principles of membership management. Recall that mutual-support organisations play a prominent role in the community perspective. In this context, while membership management may make recruitment easier (as compared to the programme-management practices of service-delivery organisations), the assets and capacities of the members also determine the ability of these organisations to achieve their desired objectives. The mere fact that the volunteers involved in mutual support organisations do not happen to have the skills (e.g. administrative or financial) and diversity necessary to achieve these objectives can make such organisations weak and vulnerable. Volunteer administrators are likely to be members as well. Although many of these organisations do have paid staff, their scope is usually quite limited (Meijs and Ten Hoorn, 2008, 34).

It is important to note the fundamental differences between mutual-support organisations and service-delivery organisations. While NPOs formed according to mutual support perform their activities with and for each other, NPOs oriented towards the delivery of services do things for others. Despite these differences, however, the two types of organisations are similar in several aspects as well. In some cases, mutual-support organisations may even evolve into service-delivery organisations or develop a combination of the two functions. For example, a self-help group for heart patients may initiate or operate an information department, or a nursing home may recruit volunteers for service-delivery tasks while stimulating its residents to organise activities with and for each other.

The combination of service delivery and mutual support poses a challenge for volunteer administrators. A focus on mutual support calls for membership management, while service-delivery tasks are best served by programme management. Organisations or volunteer administrators that neglect this difference in management style are likely to encounter problems.

#### *6.5.3.2 The position of paid staff in the relation to volunteers*

Section 6.1.5 distinguished between volunteer-supported organisations (many of which are service-delivery organisations) and volunteer-run organisations (many of which are mutual-support organisations). In volunteer-supported organisations, volunteer administrators often operate programmes that were formulated either by paid staff or by a volunteer board (with few ties to the direct 'service' volunteers), recruiting and selecting volunteers who meet the requirements of those programmes. In mutual-support organi-

sations, volunteer administrators usually support, facilitate or coordinate volunteers in the implementation of self-determined goals; they must therefore make do with the volunteers that are present within the organisation (Meijs and Ten Hoorn, 2008, 36).

### 6.5.3.3 *The character of volunteering*

From the community perspective, volunteering takes on the character of 'doing things with and for each other'. The people that are involved cooperate to organise all aspects of the organisation's activities. In mutual-support organisations (which play a prominent role in the community perspective), there is a clear relationship between volunteers, members and clients, accompanied by a strong sense of reciprocity. These groups are more likely to be oriented towards providing benefits for their own membership than they are towards providing benefits to non-members, and they tend to prefer informal organisation and internal democracy (Meijs and Ten Hoorn, 2008, 33). From this perspective, volunteering is expressive and inclusive. Because of their high level of self-efficacy, these groups tend not to be dependent upon external economic resources, and they tend to have a high degree of operational independence. In 'volunteer-run organisations' (Meijs, 1997; Meijs and Hoogstad, 2001, 46), in which volunteers both set and realise the goals, the commitment of volunteers to their organisations and their influence on policy development is very strong.

## 6.6 **Analysis**

This section summarises the discussions presented in this chapter in a number of tables:

- Interests of various parties within each perspective (Table 22);
- Current nonprofit regimes in the eight researched cases (Table 23);
- Nonprofit regimes, by perspective (Table 24);
- Dominant perspectives, by country (Table 25);
- Dominant and recognised perspectives, by country (Table 26);
- The two most important functions for each perspective (Table 27);
- Dominant motives in each perspective (Table 28);
- Characteristics of volunteering, by perspective (Table 29);

Table 22 provides an overview of the main interests of various parties, as seen from the four perspectives. Volunteers and governments have interests in all of the four perspectives. Campaigning and mutual-support organisations each have interest in just one specific perspective, while service-delivery organisations and third parties have interests in two or three perspectives.

Table 22: Interests of various parties within each perspective

Interests	Perspective			
	Welfare	Democratic	Economic	Community
Volunteers	x	x	x	x
Service-delivery NPOs	x			x
Campaigning NPOs		x		
Mutual-support NPOs				x
Governments	x	x	x	x
Third parties	x		x	x

As described in Section 6.1.7, the Social Origins Theory developed by Salamon and Anheier distinguishes four nonprofit regimes (liberal, social democratic, corporatist and statist. Table 23 presents the currently dominant nonprofit regime types in the eight cases addressed in this research. It is important to note that some of the cases (England, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands) support other regime types in addition to the dominant regime. According to Salamon and Sokolowski (2001):

Most countries came under the influence of different policy regimes in different time periods, which left varying degrees of influence. For example, the U.S largely followed the liberal model before the Great Depression, but the subsequent social welfare policies, especially the 'Great Society' programs instituted under the Johnson administration introduced a corporatist element [...] In the same vein, central planning regimes in Eastern Europe had instituted statist policies, which were later reversed during the 1989 reforms (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 14).

But as we noted earlier, some countries experienced different regime types in different periods, and these two other criteria must weigh against the social and institutional history to make a historically accurate allocation to a regime category. [...] Both Italy and the U.K., for example, have relatively high levels of government social welfare spending like Western Europe welfare states. However the strong, if ambiguous, position of the Church in the Italian social welfare system argues for treating this country as a 'corporatist' rather than a 'social democratic' case. And the long history of limited government social welfare spending prior to the post-World War II Beveridge reforms in health care argues for assigning the U.K. to the 'liberal' pattern rather than the 'social democratic' one. (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 17-18).

France, Germany, and the Netherlands have a more pronounced expressive form of volunteering, and larger overall amount of volunteering, than stipulated by their assignment to the corporatist category. This can be attributed to the growth of progressive political activism during the 1960s and 1970s that influenced government social policies, especially in France, as well as growing popularity of sports and leisure activities. For example the Netherlands, a clear-cut case of the corporatist model due to its "pillarization" policies that incorporated religiously based nonprofit agencies into the state-financed welfare system, has a large share of its volunteering input concentrating in sports, the popularity of which has been rapidly growing since the 1960s. A similar process can be observed for Germany (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 19).

Table 23: Current nonprofit regimes in the eight cases under investigation, based on Salamon and Sokolowski (2001, 19)

Country	Nonprofit regimes			
	Liberal	Social-democratic	Corporatist	Statist
Denmark		dominant		
England	dominant	supported		
Finland		dominant		
Germany		supported	dominant	
Italy		supported	dominant	
Netherlands		supported	dominant	
Norway		dominant		
United States	dominant			

Each of the four nonprofit regimes (liberal, social democratic, corporatist and statist) distinguished in the Social Origins Theory developed by Salamon and Anheier (1998) ascribes its own values to volunteering and supports the perspective that emphasises these values. Table 24 shows the perspectives that are clearly reflected in policies and measures of each regime. Campaign-related communications by politicians expressing symbolic support for particular perspectives or governmental initiatives involving the small-scale exploration of new perspectives (as is currently the case in Scandinavian countries with regard to their position on the welfare perspective on volunteering) were not considered in this analysis. With their limited government social welfare protection and low levels of nonprofit activity, statist regimes do not develop specific policies for supporting volunteering (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 14).

Table 24: Nonprofit regimes, by perspective

Regime	Perspective			
	Welfare	Democratic	Economic	Community
Liberal	x			
Corporatist	x		x	x
Social democratic		x		x
Statist				

Table 25 shows that public policies in the cases included in this study are particularly likely to support the welfare and community perspectives. It is important to note that these attributions are not based on quantitative evidence. Further research is needed to determine the percentage of volunteers in each country who are involved in activities that reflect each perspective and to monitor possible shifts between the four perspectives. Despite the lack of such research, literature examination and empirical research do show that the welfare perspective, with its service roles (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001, 16), tends to be more prominent in countries that adhere to a civil society (e.g. the Netherlands, England and Germany). According to Salamon and Sokolowski (2001, 16), the community perspective, with its expressive roles, is dominant in social democratic regimes (e.g. Scandinavian countries).

Table 25: Dominant perspectives, by country

Country	Perspective			
	Welfare	Democratic	Economic	Community
Denmark				dominant
England	dominant			
Finland				dominant
Germany	dominant			
Italy	dominant			
Netherlands	dominant			
Norway				dominant
United States	dominant			

In addition to the dominant perspectives on volunteering shown in Table 25, Table 26 shows all perspectives on volunteering that are recognised in the eight cases investigated. This figure is considered the most explanatory for the differences that have been found between volunteer centres in the cases investigated. The perspectives on volunteering that are dominant and recognised in a certain country affect the functions and activities of volunteer centres, and they generate deviations from the template for volunteering infrastructure

Table 26: Dominant and recognised perspectives, by country

Country	Perspectives			
	Welfare	Democratic	Economic	Community
Denmark		<i>recognised</i>		dominant
England	dominant	<i>recognised</i>	<i>recognised</i>	<i>recognised</i>
Finland		<i>recognised</i>		dominant
Germany	dominant	<i>recognised</i>	<i>recognised</i>	<i>recognised</i>
Italy	dominant	<i>recognised</i>		<i>recognised</i>
Netherlands	dominant	<i>recognised</i>	<i>recognised</i>	<i>recognised</i>
Norway		<i>recognised</i>		dominant
United States	dominant			

This section refers to the typology developed by Salamon and Anheier (1998, 241) to describe the relationship that exists between perspectives on volunteering and nonprofit regimes. In light of this relationship, it is understandable that volunteer centres in the cases in which the welfare perspective on volunteering dominates (United States, England, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands) would concentrate on the brokerage and marketing functions. Volunteer centres in the cases that support or recognise the community and democratic perspectives (Norway, Denmark and Finland) emphasise the provision of logistical services and organisational support. All of these activities are derived from the function developing opportunities. The dominance of the community discourse and the emphasis on community support in Norway is affirmed by a recent white paper published by the Norwegian government, in which volunteer centres are described as *community centres* 'that support both new initiatives and existing activities and projects, stimulate participation and voluntary work in the local community' (St. meld nr. 39, 2006-2007, 204-205). Table 27 identifies the two most important volunteering-infrastructure functions for each perspective on volunteering.

Table 27: The two most important functions for each perspective

Function	Perspective			
	Welfare	Democratic	Economic	Community
Brokerage	x		x	
Marketing	x			
Good practice development				x
Developing opportunities		x	x	x
Policy response & campaigning		x		
Strategic development				

The *brokerage* and *marketing* functions are particularly valuable for the welfare perspective. It is important to note that, within the welfare perspective, brokerage excludes people from volunteering by selecting only those who comply with certain requirements (in contrast to the economic perspective, where brokerage focuses simply on including everyone who wants to volunteer). The welfare perspective stresses the role of volunteers in the delivery of services. Marketing is an important means of involving as many volunteers as possible in delivering these services.

From the democratic perspective, conditions and facilities that enhance civic engagement are essential. To stimulate citizens to express their engagement, the *development of appropriate opportunities* is an important activity. The function of *policy response and campaigning* increases awareness of volunteerism and creates a more volunteer-literate and volunteer-friendly climate.

*Brokerage* and *developing opportunities* are the two main functions from the economic perspective. Within this perspective, the brokerage process often has the character of empowering and activating prospective volunteers and selecting opportunities that match their assets and capacities. The function of developing opportunities is an important means of providing volunteers with appropriate opportunities.

The community perspective focuses on mutual support, trust, social cohesion and the production of social capital within communities. The *development of opportunities* works towards these goals and is therefore relevant as a means of strengthening the community perspective. The same applies to the description of *good practices* and the sharing and distribution of knowledge concerning these practices.

These insights lead to an explanation for why not all of the six functions are performed in all of the eight cases addressed in this study: Preferences for particular perspectives on volunteering vary by country.

Table 26 shows that a number of cases recognise one or more other perspectives on volunteering in addition to the dominant perspective. In most cases, recognition involves symbolic support in speech and policy documents, without the provision of means (structural or otherwise) for the concrete development of that perspective.

Chapter 6 identifies distinctions between the interests that four different parties have in volunteering (Section 6.1.2) and specifies these interests for each perspective on volunteering. Volunteer centres respond to these interests (in many cases, pro-actively and unnoticed) by providing new functions or expanding their existing functions, without receiving any additional resources. This leads to the conclusion that volunteer centres in



the cases that discuss multiple perspectives on volunteering (e.g. England, Germany and the Netherlands) tend to blame the poor preconditions existing within organisations for the differences between their actual performance and the template for a volunteering infrastructure.

As discussed in Section 6.1.4, the interests that individuals have in volunteering can be expressed in terms of motivational categories, as in the functional approach to volunteer motivation developed by Clary, Snyder and colleagues (1998; Snyder and colleagues 2000), and elaborated further by Musick and Wilson (2008). Table 28 assigns these six functional categories to the perspectives within which they could be expected to play a prominent role. The pattern that emerges suggests the perspective on volunteering that is likely to be preferred by volunteers according to their motivation. For example, a shortage of volunteers in a service delivery organisation operating within the welfare perspective can simultaneously interfere with the supply of volunteers in a cultural organisation operating within the community or democratic perspective. The preferences of volunteers are not static; they shift in response to societal and economic developments or personal circumstances. Earlier this dissertation (Section 3.1.2) referred to the recent increase in reflexive styles of volunteering. Many volunteers search for opportunities to realise their 'enlightened self-interest', and they do not let the preferences of other parties (e.g. NPOs or governments) affect their choices (Section 3.1.1). This insight is confirmed by studies of citizen initiatives in the Netherlands (Hurenkamp and colleagues 2006; Verhoeven and Ham, 2010), as well as by Wuthnow (1998, 4), who observes that 'civic involvement is changing rather than simply declining'.

Table 28: Dominant motives in each perspective

Motives	Perspective			
	Welfare	Democratic	Economy	Community
Value	x	x		x
Enhancement	x		x	x
Social	x			x
Career			x	
Protective			x	x
Understanding				x

This chapter has discussed a number of aspects that characterise volunteering. Because each of the four perspectives emphasises different aspects, the 'colour' of volunteering also differs according to perspective. Table 29 shows which of the perspectives imply an inclusive or exclusive approach to volunteers, which attribute an instrumental character (service role) to volunteering and which assume that volunteering offers citizens the opportunity to express (expressive role) their personal beliefs, ideals, interests and needs. The chart also identifies the perspectives that assume volunteer involvement in setting the goals of their organisations, as well as the style of volunteer management that best reflects each perspective.

Table 29: Characteristics of volunteering, by perspective

Characteristic	Perspective			
	Welfare	Democratic	Economic	Community
Inclusive character		x	x	x
Exclusive character	x			
Instrumental character	x		x	
Expressive character		x	x	x
Involvement in goal-setting		x		x
Management style	Programme	Membership	Membership & Programme	Membership

## 6.7 Conclusion

The framework of four discourses on civic engagement designed by Hilger (2005b, 7; Table 20) has served as backbone of this chapter. This framework allows the specification of distinctions between the various perspectives on volunteering that were identified in public policies on civic engagement volunteering. It has showed the types of measures with which these policies have been performed in the different cases.

This chapter has also searched for academic support for the four different perspectives on volunteering. Although some support was found, it obviously did not concern the separate perspectives on volunteering. Most refers to the connectedness of the four perspectives on volunteering, which some regard as indissoluble (Kramer, 1981; Putnam, 1993; Ostrom, 2000; Tocqueville, 2004 [1835]). Schneider and Blond especially appoint to the coherence between the welfare and community perspective. Schneider (2006) elaborates on the meaning of social capital for welfare reform in the US, and Blond (2010, 76) describes the social damage caused by the Thatcher regime in England, simply through the destruction of the connection between the community and welfare perspective on volunteering. Lipsky and Rathgeb Smith (1989) show that NPOs that focus excessively on a single perspective (in this case, the welfare perspective) become increasingly dependent on governmental funding, thereby stressing the values that have been attributed to voluntarism. According to Weisbrod (1998), such developments can even cause the 'commercial transformation' of NPOs. In the context of the economic perspective on volunteering, Beck (1996; 1999) and Rifkin (1995; Section 6.4.2.1) develop proposals to allocate due to unemployment unused labour for the performance of – similar to volunteering – work for the community. Jakob (1999, 51) warns that these approaches cause an 'instrumentalisation of volunteering', which could threaten the very character of volunteer involvement.

While communitarians like Etzioni (2005 [1996]) are particularly inclined to merge the democratic and community perspectives on volunteering, Boyte argues against the practice. In discussing the relevance of the distinction between *public* and *community* with regard to the role of citizens in politics with Etzioni (Boyte and Etzioni, 1993, 86), Boyte actually supports the distinction between a democratic and community perspective on volunteering with the following arguments:

In public, we can learn to work with people with whom we disagree sharply and do not want to live 'in community'. Thus, the concept of public is more effective than community in generating an understanding of shared fate and

common principles, precisely because it is less hortatory and more pragmatic. It creates a space for different communal moralities. A public arena draws attention to the notion of a 'commonwealth', a reciprocal exchange of public obligations and public goods. But it recognises different interests, values, and trajectories, and the ways people learn to engage the public world in their distinctive styles, through their own experiences (Boyte and Etzioni, 1993, 87).

This chapter also highlights the relationship between four perspectives on volunteering and the motives that nonprofit regimes have for supporting volunteering. This relationship notwithstanding, perspectives and nonprofit regimes are two different things. The perspectives represent an inclusive, scientifically supported approach to volunteering that clearly delineates four mutually reinforcing facets of volunteering. With regard to the volunteering policies of nonprofit regimes, this chapter reveals that policymakers are inclined to adopt exclusive inclined to volunteering, focusing solely on the perspectives on volunteering that support their specific policy goals.

Chapter 5 compared the functions actually provided by volunteer centres in the eight cases to the template for a volunteering infrastructure. This comparison revealed that, in practice, few volunteer centres meet the outlined template. Four practical explanations are proposed for this deviation. To supplement these explanations, Chapter 6 examined the possibility of finding additional explanations for the deviations by elaborating on four perspectives on volunteering. Chapter 7 concludes that these perspectives provide additional plausible explanations for the deviations and describes the impact of the perspectives on the functions of the volunteering infrastructure.



# 7 THE IMPACT OF FOUR PERSPECTIVES ON VOLUNTEERING ON THE FUNCTIONS OF THE VOLUNTEERING INFRASTRUCTURE

## 7.1 Introduction

Section 4.5.3 presented a template for a volunteering infrastructure. This infrastructure is intended to support volunteers, organisations and volunteerism by performing six functions. In Chapter 5, this template was used to examine the functions that are actually provided by the local volunteering infrastructure in each of the eight cases addressed in this study, concluding that not all of the six functions are provided in each country. Chapter 5 proposed four explanations for this conclusion. Following an elaboration on four perspectives on volunteering Chapter 6 presented the following additional, more fundamental explanations for the found differences between volunteering infrastructures in the eight cases that were investigated (Section 6.6):

- The eight cases have different nonprofit regimes;
- Each nonprofit regime tends to prefer a specific perspective on volunteering;
- Not all of the six functions are equally necessary within the various perspectives on volunteering.

### 7.1.1 Consequence of explanations

Summarising the findings of Chapter 5 and those following from Chapter 6, six explanations have been derived for the deviation of the functions that volunteer centres in the eight cases actually provide from the template for a volunteering infrastructure. The explanations can be divided into three categories:

- Fundamental:
  - Not all functions are desired at each level of support (Section 5.2.1);
  - Not all of the six functions are equally necessary within the various perspectives on volunteering (Table 27).
- Means:
  - Poor preconditions (Section 5.2.2);
  - Dependence on local funding (Section 5.2.3).
- Political circumstances and choices:
  - Lack of structural support for the concept of volunteering infrastructure (Section 5.2.4);
  - The cases have different nonprofit regimes (Table 23);
  - Each nonprofit regime tends to prefer a specific perspective on volunteering (Table 25 and 26).

These explanations indicate that most volunteer centres have no need or means to pursue the template for a volunteering infrastructure. The template is relevant only for situations in which all four perspectives on volunteering are both recognised and supported. As shown in Section 6.6 (Table 25), public policies in the eight cases investigated in this study favour either the welfare or the community perspective. Although regimes in these cases recognise other perspectives on volunteering in addition to the dominant ones (Table 26), their support for the other perspectives is incidental and brief. Theoretically a single country can simultaneously support different nonprofit regime models (Table 23) and recognise and support all four perspectives on volunteering equally, although this possibility is quite small.

In the cases where politicians discuss several perspectives simultaneously (e.g. Germany, England, Italy or the Netherlands), it would seem logical for governments and the voluntary sector to support all four perspectives on volunteering equally. In practice however, this does not appear to be the case. Governments are not monolithic entities, but a sum of independently operating departments. For example, welfare departments need support for the welfare perspective on volunteering in order to involve as many volunteers as possible in the delivery of public services. Social security departments need support for the economic perspective because of its emphasis on the social inclusion of people at risk. Community departments need support for the community perspective in order to revitalise neighbourhoods and to stimulate mutuality, and city registries need support for the democratic perspective in order to encourage the involvement and participation of citizens in political decision making. Different governmental departments can support different perspectives that lead them to demand a particular combination of functions at different times from volunteer centres.

The concept of volunteering infrastructure is not a fixed notion belonging exclusively to the sector itself. Consider the inspiring speeches of Blair and Schröder on 'The Third Way' (Salamon and colleagues, 2003; Howlett and Locke, 1999), or the influence of social committees as the Aves Committee in the 1960s in England (Howlett, 2008, 3) or the Investigation Commission on Civic Engagement in Germany (Enquete-Kommission, 2002). Other examples include such political measures as the English Compact on Volunteering from 1998 (Plowden, 2003), the Temporary Stimulation Measure for Volunteering (Bos, 2006) and the Social Support Act of 2007 in the Netherlands. Even such special events as the International Year of Volunteers 2001 (Davis Smith, 2003) and the European Year of volunteers 2009 express the importance of volunteering infrastructure for the realisation of a civil society in visionary and well-founded terms. The central theme of the 2009 General Assembly Conference of the European Volunteer Centre was 'An enabling Volunteering Infrastructure in Europe'. These types of speeches, commissions, measures and events have caused a demonstrable impetus for the establishment and reinforcement of the national and local in the eight cases I have investigated.

Unfortunately, the temporary character of these impetuses can be observed in the decrease and even closure of volunteer centres after several years. It could be that the volunteering infrastructure has fallen to the same fate as have other 'soft issues', including civil society and civic engagement. Hilger (2008a, 195) observes:

Politicians tend to turn to such issues in times of election campaigning. Once they are in government their commitment to engagement and civil society can be maintaining as long as it remains connected to the general policy orienta-

tion. As soon as competition for resources emerges, prospects for civil society policy easily decrease. 'Hard issues' such as economic growth, employment, health care, crisis prevention and others draw most of the attention.

The voluntary infrastructure has many stakeholders who have a temporally interest in a specific function or level of support, but it lacks a party who is willing provide structural support for the concept of a volunteering infrastructure

### **7.1.2 One template does not fit all**

In terms of the future of volunteering infrastructure, it does not seem worthwhile to invest in developing strategies aimed at matching the template for one size fits all volunteering infrastructure. Instead, four separate templates are proposed, one for each perspective on volunteering. Although these templates share the six functions in common, the functions are not needed to the same extent or in the same way within each perspective on volunteering. Sections 7.2–7.5 therefore identify and discuss for each perspective on volunteering which of the six functions are most relevant to the operations of volunteering infrastructure. In addition, resource limitations make it necessary to set priorities with regard to volunteering infrastructure. In Sections 7.2–7.5, the importance of the six functions is ranked for each perspective by subdividing the functions into primary, secondary and tertiary functions.

This ranking is elaborated for two reasons. First, the ranking adds nuance to the common view that considers volunteer centres as synonymous with brokerage agencies. This view ignores the fact that the importance of brokerage varies according to the prevailing perspective of volunteering. Second, by placing the functions in order of importance, it becomes possible to show that the professional and material equipment required to perform each function can differ according to perspective as well. Table 30 presents a summary of the ranking and shows that the support for each perspective on volunteering places different demands on the volunteering infrastructure.

For each function, a general description is provided of functions and activities that the volunteering infrastructure should realise, in addition to the skills, knowledge and other resources that are needed in order to perform these functions. This discussion is followed by a concise profile of the type of volunteering infrastructure that is most appropriate to support each perspective on volunteering.

Section 7.6 summarises the results of the elaboration presented in Sections 7.2–7.5 and presents a concise overview of the various requirements that each perspective imposes on the volunteering infrastructure. The conclusion drawn in this section is that volunteering infrastructures that support one of the four perspectives are not necessarily equipped to support the other perspectives on volunteering. The summary identifies the skills, knowledge and other resources that the volunteering infrastructure must acquire in order to expand its support to include other perspectives on volunteering.

The chapter concludes by stating that proper conditions are of crucial importance to the future of the volunteering infrastructure and by offering a number of recommendations for improving these conditions (Section 7.7).

## 7.2 Volunteering infrastructure in the welfare perspective

The welfare perspective on volunteering (Section 6.2) focuses on the service function of NPOs, with specific attention to the role of volunteers in the delivery of services. Altruism and 'doing for' are features of this mode of volunteering (Hilger, 2006b, 20). For NPOs, volunteers are an important means through which to deliver their services. Service-delivery NPOs, governments, third parties and volunteers have considerable interest in the welfare perspective (Table 22), as it addresses the need for more volunteers and focuses on the recruitment, selection, training and retention of the best volunteers at the lowest costs. The volunteering infrastructure supports this perspective by informing the public about the unlimited opportunities for and benefits of volunteering, with the ultimate goal of recruiting as many volunteers as possible for NPOs. Brokerage and marketing are the two main functions through which the volunteering infrastructure can achieve this goal (Table 27).

### 7.2.1 Primary functions: brokerage and marketing

#### *Brokerage*

From the welfare perspective, brokerage is the distinctive function of the volunteering infrastructure. In Section 3.3.2, the brokerage function was elaborated with the introduction of the 'Recruitment and referral continuum' (Figure 2). This model provides a rough distinction between two options for brokerage:

- Volunteering-infrastructure services consist solely of informing prospective volunteers about placements that are available within the community. Volunteers make their own decisions regarding what they will do with the information they have received.
- Actors within the volunteering infrastructure provide much more than information alone, paying particular attention to helping NPOs to meet their need for volunteers and engaging in various activities to facilitate placement.

The second brokerage option is most consistent with the welfare perspective, which aims to respond to the need of NPOs for more volunteers. Organisations expect actors within the volunteering infrastructure to help them find volunteers who meet specific requirements related to the service that must be delivered. In this context, volunteering-infrastructure agencies can perform the following activities:

*Information:* The brokerage process is based on providing a current and varied overview of volunteering opportunities, with concrete information about the service to be delivered and the effects of those services, along with a description of tasks and requirements expected of a volunteer. Additional information concerns conditions that make opportunities attractive to volunteers, including training, interesting networks, inspiring experiences, new contacts and expense reimbursements. These conditions can play a role in a volunteer's decision to choose a particular volunteering opportunity.

*Consultation:* Many people who are considering volunteering appreciate the opportunity to consult with volunteering-infrastructure agencies. During such consultations, prospective volunteers can become acquainted with the various options that are available and



explore the options that best fit their interests. Agencies that consider consultation essential to the brokerage process provide concrete information about opportunities (e.g. address, contact person) only during such consultations. During such consultations, prospective volunteers have the opportunity to register their personal details, thus allowing the possibility of follow-up contact to determine whether they actually do want to volunteer.

Although consultation is an appreciated, successful activity, it has a number of drawbacks. The consultation process is time-intensive and costly, although the costs can be reduced by involving volunteer staff in the consultations. The limited availability of consultation poses another problem. In many cases, consultations are possible only during office hours. Consultation thus allows actors within the volunteering infrastructure to make intensive contact with a limited target group consisting largely of people who are available to volunteer during the day.

*Selection:* During a consultation, a volunteering-infrastructure agency can increase the likelihood that prospective volunteers will satisfy the requirements of an organisation by providing clear job descriptions and by including capability for specific jobs in their discussions with prospective volunteers. Nevertheless, it is ultimately the job of volunteer administrators in volunteer involving organisations to determine whether prospective volunteers are suitable for particular jobs. In the case of digital brokerage, prospective volunteers respond directly to organisations that are seeking volunteers without first consulting a volunteering-infrastructure agency. In such situations, these agencies have little opportunity to contribute to pre-selection.

*Placement:* The volunteering infrastructure cannot guarantee organisations that they will be able to meet their needs for volunteers in terms of either quantity or quality. Volunteering-infrastructure agencies serve a large number of local organisations that are in search for volunteers and, although they can draw attention to specific opportunities, they cannot favour one organisation over another. Prospective volunteers ultimately choose the opportunities that best suit their own interests from amongst the many opportunities that are available. Although the clients of the volunteering-infrastructure include both organisations and volunteers, the interests of these two client groups do not necessarily coincide (Section 3.3.2). Because of their contacts with volunteers, volunteering-infrastructure agencies are aware of the conditions that make opportunities attractive to volunteers, and they can share this knowledge with volunteer administrators.

*Brokerage and Internet:* The availability of the internet allows actors within the volunteering infrastructure to publish volunteering opportunities in the form of digital job-vacancy listings on their websites. This allows them to provide a wide audience with access to information on volunteering opportunities 24 hours a day, seven days a week. An agency can link information from the digital job-vacancy listings to the websites of organisations that need volunteers. Prospective volunteers can respond to vacancy listings directly, without any intervention from the volunteering infrastructure. Increasing numbers of NPOs are providing information on volunteering opportunities on their own websites, thus allowing prospective volunteers to find this information on their own, again without any intervention from the volunteering infrastructure. While the internet affects the unique position of the brokerage function of the volunteering infrastructure, it also offers the possibility of developing new digital services (e.g. portals that provide an overview of and access to all local organisations that involve volunteers). The shift from per-

sonal to digital service delivery will be a feature of the volunteering infrastructure's operations in the future.

Although little specific research has been conducted on the brokerage function, it is important not to over-estimate the net proceeds of this function alone. With regard to the situation in England, Howlett (2008, 1) states that 'only a very small proportion of volunteers find their volunteering opportunities through the volunteering infrastructure, with some surveys putting it as low as two percent'. The brokerage function of the volunteering infrastructure is in addition to the recruitment activities that organisations conduct themselves. According to Willems (1994, 194), impulses from people within a prospective volunteer's personal network can play a particularly decisive role with regard to the decision to participate in volunteering. Many people indicate that they decided to volunteer in response to concrete appeals from family, friends, colleagues or associations to which they belong.

Penberthy and Forster (2004, 33) argue that brokerage is a primary function, within which many of the other six functions are incorporated as sub-sets or delivery mechanisms. The importance of the brokerage function should be determined not only according to the number of matches between volunteers and organisations, but also according to the impact of the brokerage function on the other functions, in addition to its coherence with those functions. The brokerage function allows actors within the volunteering infrastructure to offer a local overview of all organisations that involve volunteers, to know the conditions under which residents are willing to volunteer and to maintain relationships with people and agencies that have interest in or are relevant for volunteering. With this knowledge, local volunteering-infrastructure agencies can act as local resources for information on a wide variety of questions related to volunteering.

### *Marketing*

The volunteering infrastructure promotes volunteering in general, and it serves a variety of parties that have an interest in volunteering (Section 6.1.2). Marketing activities are essential to the successful promotion of volunteering. Marketing involves more than the publication of volunteer vacancies listed by organisations. Marketing is a means to both exploring and promoting the interests that various parties have in volunteering.

*Exploration:* Within the welfare perspective, NPOs aim to involve the best volunteers for the lowest costs, and they seek to recruit and select people who meet the requirements necessary for the proper delivery of services (whether directly or after training). The volunteering infrastructure can support NPOs by proactively exploring the willingness of people within the community (and within specific groups in the community) to provide the abilities and skills that NPOs need in order to deliver their services.

According to the principle of 'interest rightly understood' (Tocqueville, 2004 [1835], 643), many people should be willing to contribute their abilities and skills to NPOs (and even to governmental volunteering programmes). In some cases, they may even be willing to donate their professional abilities and skills voluntarily and for no pay, as long as their own interests are clearly served through an activity. Section 6.2.2.3 identifies interests that are relevant for the involvement of volunteers from the welfare perspective on volunteering. The volunteering infrastructure can inform NPOs about these interests and

help them to serve these interests through their activities. Information can also be provided regarding conditions that could further increase the likelihood that people will offer the required abilities and skills. Frequent contact with prospective and current volunteers allows actors within the volunteering infrastructure to understand the expectations and conditions that are relevant for contemporary volunteers. Examples include clearly defined tasks, visible results, training facilities, recognition, expense reimbursement, career related benefits and flexible opportunities that easily can fit easily into busy personal schedules. The volunteering infrastructure can use this knowledge to develop marketing strategies and recommendations for NPOs regarding how they can make volunteering opportunities more attractive to new groups. The volunteering infrastructure can also explore the extent to which third parties that have interest in volunteering (Section 6.2.2.4) can embed volunteer activities into their programmes for service learning, community service or corporate social responsibility (Section 3.1.3).

In the interest of such exploration, the volunteering infrastructure should have wide-branching roots within the local community. Proper networks can be developed through such efforts as the well-considered composition of the governing boards of volunteering-infrastructure agencies.

*Promotion:* Appeals for volunteers are more effective if the description of opportunities reflects both the interests of the NPO and the interests of prospective volunteers (Section 3.1.2). Through marketing activities, volunteering-infrastructure agencies can convey a general message about the versatility and benefits of volunteering or focus on particular target groups, emphasising the benefits that appeal to the interests of those groups.

Volunteering infrastructure can also benefit from opportunities for free publicity in the media. Because concrete examples are often more appealing in the media than are general concepts, interviews with enthusiastic volunteers can be used to strengthen recruitment drives. Social media (e.g. Hyves, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) offer a new means for conducting marketing activities. These media allow actors within the volunteering infrastructure direct access to groups that may not be familiar with the phenomenon of volunteering (e.g. youth, immigrants; Dekker, Hart and Faulk, 2007, 91) or groups that face obstacles to volunteering (Volunteering England, 2010). These audiences can be invited to information meetings. The local volunteering infrastructure can benefit from large-scale national campaigns for volunteering by linking local activities to such campaigns.

### **7.2.2 Secondary functions: good-practice development and developing volunteering opportunities**

#### *Good-practice development*

Volunteering policies are an important means for managing the quality and continuity of service delivery and for securing the motivation and satisfaction of volunteers. Programme management is the most effective style for supporting the welfare perspective on volunteering (Section 6.2.3.1). The volunteering infrastructure can contribute to the implementation of programme management by supporting volunteer administrators (e.g. through training and consultation) and by organising networks in which administrators can meet colleagues to share practices. Volunteering policies and volunteer management

are instruments for consolidating the results of the brokerage process and retaining volunteers.

#### *Developing volunteering opportunities*

The volunteering infrastructure can also develop volunteering opportunities independently, by responding to demands for volunteer involvement that other organisations do not meet or by seizing opportunities for volunteer involvement that other organisations neglect. By developing their own volunteer projects, volunteering-infrastructure agencies can expand the number and character of opportunities, set a good example to other organisations and gain additional revenue. For many volunteering-infrastructure agencies, the financial aspects of these activities are purely a means of economic survival, given that the financial resources available for the infrastructural tasks are insufficient to ensure sound management. By carrying out their own projects, however, volunteering-infrastructure agencies can risk their independent intermediary position and arouse the suspicion among local NPOs that they are 'capturing' the best volunteers for own projects (Osborne, 1999b, 75).

### **7.2.3 Tertiary functions: policy response & campaigning and strategic development of volunteering**

#### *Policy response & campaigning*

From the welfare perspective, volunteering infrastructure leads and devises the development of volunteering policies in organisations. In cooperation with national branch organisations, volunteering-infrastructure agencies can establish standards for volunteering policies and volunteer management, and they can bestow quality awards on organisations that meet these standards. As part of the function of good-practice development, volunteering-infrastructure agencies can support organisations in their efforts to meet these standards.

#### *Strategic development of volunteering*

Although brokerage is the most distinctive core function within the welfare perspective, the effectiveness of brokerage is inextricably related to the performance of the functions of marketing, good-practice development and the development of volunteering opportunities, as discussed above. As mentioned in Section 5.2.2, poor conditions can impede local volunteering-infrastructure agencies in performing the other three functions properly alongside the brokerage function. Agencies can develop various strategies for improving their performance in these areas (Section 7.6).

The goal of both of these tertiary functions (i.e. policy response/campaigning and the strategic development of volunteering) is to strengthen the operational back-office processes of the volunteering infrastructure.

### 7.3 Volunteering infrastructure in the democratic perspective

The democratic perspective on volunteering (Section 6.3) stresses the role of civic engagement, volunteering and associations in shaping the political conduct of society. It considers volunteering as a way for citizens to provide input and legitimacy for political systems (whether directly or indirectly) and as a way for them to participate in the implementation of decisions (Hilger, 2005b). Shared interests are one feature of this mode of volunteering (Hilger, 2006b, 20). The democratic perspective argues for an expansive definition of volunteering, and it is interested in new expressions of civic engagement. From this perspective, volunteering can be defined as *active citizenship*: an individual's responsibility towards the community or polity (Dekker, 2005). Campaigning NPOs, governments and active citizens have the greatest interests in the democratic perspective (Table 22). The three most prominent functions within this perspective are good-practice development, the development of volunteering opportunities and policy response and campaigning (Table 27).

#### **7.3.1 Primary functions: good-practice development, developing volunteering opportunities and policy response & campaigning**

##### *Good-practice development*

*Local knowledge centres*: Active citizenship and the implications of volunteering for the construction of civil society are issues that are receiving increasing interest, both nationally and internationally. In this context, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation<sup>109</sup> and the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project are important international knowledge resources.

With its Civil Society Index, CIVICUS (2009) provides a participatory needs assessment and action planning tool for civil society around the world, with the aim of creating a knowledge base and momentum for civil society strengthening initiatives. The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (2010) is a systematic effort to analyse the scope, structure, financing and impact of nonprofit activity throughout the world. Both institutes are rooted in and offer platforms for national governmental, non-governmental and academic organisations that have an interest in strengthening civil society. As of this writing, 46 countries (including all eight of the cases that are addressed in this research) were participating in the Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project.

The Netherlands Institute for Social Research,<sup>110</sup> which was established by Royal Decree in 1973, is one of the participants in the international Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project. Between 1994 and 2009, this institute researched the implications of volunteering for civil society and published five studies on this topic (Dekker, 1994; Deth and Leijenaar, 1994; Dekker, 1999; Hart, 2005; Dekker and Hart, 2009).

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<sup>109</sup> CIVICUS is an international alliance of members and partners that constitute an influential network of organisations at the local, national, regional and international levels, and that span the spectrum of civil society, including the following: civil-society networks and organisations; trade unions; faith-based networks; professional associations; NPO capacity-development organisations; philanthropic foundations and other funding bodies; businesses; and social-responsibility programmes

<sup>110</sup> Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau

The Social Development Council advises the Dutch government on issues regarding participation and stability in society. This council has published a number of studies on participation, volunteering and active citizenship (RMO 1997a; 1997b; 1997c; 2000a; 2000b; 2008). The NICIS Institute (NICIS, 2009) for urban research and practice aims to reinforce the social and economic strength of cities through academic research, education and the exchange of knowledge. Citizen initiatives are amongst the topics that this institute has researched (Hurenkamp and colleagues 2006). All three of these institutions are strongly connected with the Dutch academic world, especially with professors and research groups that investigate civil society, volunteering, active citizenship and corporate social responsibility.

Similar examples can be found in the other seven cases included in this study. Each of the countries that are the case, have their own institutions and academic centres that research civil society, volunteering and active citizenship. The collection of knowledge and good practices maintained by these national institutes could be valuable for the promotion of active citizenship and the support of local civic initiatives at the local level. In cooperation with their national branch organisations, local volunteering-infrastructure agencies could act as local front offices, transferring relevant national knowledge and practices to the local level.

*Implementation of membership management:* Section 6.3.3 presented a discussion of the relationship between volunteers and organisations, stressing the management dilemma within organisations operating according to the democratic perspective on volunteering. These organisations face the challenge of seeking as many supporters as possible (in order to promote their ideas) while trying to keep their ideologies as pure as possible. Membership management can help them to resolve this dilemma. The local volunteering infrastructure can support organisations in their efforts to implement membership management.

*Developing volunteering opportunities:* The democratic perspective focuses on conditions that stimulate citizens to express their engagement through participation. Within the context of the democratic perspective, civic participation can be divided amongst three different settings:

- Participation in the governmental decision-making process, through involvement in political parties, by using the legal means of participating in governmental decisions that democracy offers to citizens or in the development and implementation of concrete governmental policies (e.g. with regard to the liveability or planning in the local community);
- Participation in campaigning organisations, which offer citizens the opportunity to express their beliefs, ideals, convictions and concerns at the local, national and international levels;
- Participation in initiatives in which citizens promote their own interests (e.g. as clients, patients, consumers, residents, employees, parents, students, victims) and try to influence policies (e.g. of governments, employers, educational and healthcare institutions).

In a study on the promotion of social involvement and personal responsibility (RMO, 2000a, 23), the Dutch Social Development Council observes that 'individuals are more

likely to feel concerned about or responsible for the non-private context if the organisational context offers them opportunities to apply human qualities and human resources’.

Local volunteering infrastructure that aims to develop opportunities for civic participation can consider the views of the Social Development Council as a recommendation for their operations. The following sections elaborate how local volunteering infrastructure can contribute to the enhancement of civic participation by developing opportunities.

*Civic participation in the governmental environment:* Civic engagement is a prerequisite for democracy (Section 6.3.2.1). In addition to voting and participation in political parties, democratic regimes can use various measures to stimulate the political involvement of citizens, particularly at the local level. Town councils can inform citizens in a transparent and concrete way about their plans and invite them to comment on them. City councils can have considerable public impact by organising debates with citizens before they address certain political issues. In the Netherlands, citizens and their organisations have the right to request speaking time in council meetings and to state their views or advocate their particular interest on issues that are on the town council’s agenda. To gain support for major decisions, municipalities can profit from the expertise and engagement of citizens and invite them to serve on advisory panels. Dutch municipalities develop policies for civic engagement (Ammerlaan, Ridder, Woltering, Haasnoot and Lenten, 2010), and mayors are responsible for compiling annual reports on the measures taken to involve citizens in the development and performance of municipal policies. These types of measures can increase the level of citizen trust in democratic institutions (WRR, 2005, 5).

To make residents more responsible for the liveability, social cohesion and safety of their communities, municipalities can delegate certain responsibilities to neighbourhood organisations, offering them resources with which to realise own plans. In this context, the interests of the democratic and community perspectives on volunteering coincide (Section 6.5.2.1).

Volunteering infrastructure can assist local governments in devising opportunities for civic participation in the development and performance of local policies. It can also support citizens (individuals as well as groups) who seek to advocate their interests and ideologies in the local government. In addition, volunteering-infrastructure agencies can provide meeting and administrative facilities to neighbourhood initiatives and support them in their efforts to develop and implement their plans.

*Participation in campaigning organisations:* This research focuses on local volunteering infrastructure. Campaigning organisations that pursue national or international goals often support their local branches from their own national headquarters. For this reason, local branches prefer to seek help from their headquarters than from within the local volunteering infrastructure. Internationalisation, information technology and similar societal processes influence volunteering (Section 3.1.2; Dekker and colleagues, 2007, 69). Citizens seek opportunities to express their engagement with local, national and international issues. Such opportunities are offered by both campaigning and service-delivery organisations. The Lonely Planet edition *Volunteer: a Traveller’s Guide to Making a Difference Around the World* (Hindle, Collinson, Richard, Miller, Wintle and Cavalieri, 2010) provides evidence that there is a market for international volunteering.

Social media (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) offer new opportunities to express supra-local engagement. Campaigning organisations are particularly likely to use these media to recruit and inform supporters. The innovative use of online social networks made it possible for Barack Obama's presidential campaign to reach more than two million registered volunteers in 2008 (Moore, 2008). Local volunteering infrastructure can provide citizens with information about the activities of campaigning organisations and opportunities for international and online volunteering.

Section 6.3.3.1 advanced the argument that campaigning organisations face a management dilemma. These organisations face the challenge of seeking as many supporters as possible (in order to promote their ideas) while trying to keep their ideologies as pure as possible. To meet the first goal, they include any person who wants to join their organisation; the second goal requires people with special assets and competencies to make their actions successful. Membership management (Meijs and Ten Hoorn, 2008, 29) can help them to resolve this dilemma. Volunteering infrastructure can make campaigning organisations familiar with membership management and support their efforts to implement this management style. Volunteering infrastructure can also provide campaigning organisations with courses on fundraising, communication, publicity and information or introduce them to the public by organising information markets. Other forms of support that volunteering-infrastructure agencies can provide to local campaigning organisations (or local branches of national organisations) include the use of premises and office facilities.

*Supporting citizen initiatives:* The local volunteering infrastructure can support citizens who want to initiate local actions or projects. With this kind of support, volunteering infrastructure can correspond to both the democratic and community perspectives (Section 7.5) on volunteering. The democratic perspective is served by initiatives that promote ideologies or certain interests in the policies of the local government or local institutions (e.g. schools, hospitals, nursing homes). The community perspective is served by initiatives that aim to strengthen communities or foster self-help, self-organisation and reciprocity. Although there are similarities between campaigning organisations and local citizen initiatives, the local orientation tends to distinguish many citizen initiatives from campaigning organisations. Citizen initiatives focus on local needs, mobilise residents to meet these needs and aim to generate social cohesion and reciprocity within the community. Actors within the local volunteering infrastructure can consult with organisation leaders in the development of their plans; they can also offer the use of premises and office facilities, create networks among new initiatives and guide them through the local social and political infrastructure. The local volunteering infrastructure can stimulate the establishment of self-help groups, offer consultation and training to people who are helping to start such groups. In addition, actors within the local volunteering infrastructure can provide assistance with funding applications and connect initiatives to programmes for corporate social responsibility or community service, as well as to community or other foundations (Section 5.6.5).

#### *Policy response & campaigning*

From the democratic perspective on volunteering, policy response and campaigning form a distinctive function. The local volunteering infrastructure keeps abreast of local government proposals that can affect civic engagement. Actors within the volunteering infra-



structure can advise their local administrations with regard to general measures that foster civic engagement and participation.

Measures that enhance civic engagement and participation stress the relationship between government and citizens, and they assume the independence and autonomy of citizens. In this respect, they extend beyond measures for volunteering policies (Section 7.2.1). Council members, local administrators and the members of NPO boards who wish to foster civic engagement and civic participation in both the development and implementation of policies should be willing to delegate certain responsibilities and to accept the fact that the choices of citizens may differ from their own preferences. The local volunteering infrastructure can recommend measures that strengthen civic engagement and participation and that support implementation.

### **7.3.2 Secondary functions: marketing**

From the democratic perspective, volunteering infrastructure can market volunteering because of its contribution to a process of deepening and widening democracy at all levels (Giddens, 1998). This contribution is expressed directly by political parties and campaigning organisations and indirectly by non-political organisations. Section 6.3.2.1 advanced the argument that civic involvement in non-political organisations serves the political system as well, and that non-political voluntary organisations can play a crucial role in the recruitment of political support. Volunteering infrastructure also can explore factors that stimulate or impede opportunities for citizens to raise their voices and express their engagement. Finally, volunteering-infrastructure agencies can be of practical service to both citizens and organisations by making the addresses of local advocacy, campaigning, political or grassroots organisations and pressure groups available publicly.

### **7.3.3 Tertiary functions: brokerage and strategic development of volunteering**

#### *Brokerage*

From the democratic perspective of volunteering, there is little need for an infrastructure that provides brokerage.

#### *Strategic development of volunteering*

The primary volunteering-infrastructure functions within this perspective are the development of volunteering opportunities and policy response and campaigning. To perform these functions, actors in the local volunteering infrastructure can provide practical facilities to support citizen initiatives and projects, in addition to developing strategies to create the proper conditions for civic engagement and participation by influencing the policies of local government and NPOs.

## **7.4 Volunteering infrastructure in the economic perspective**

The economic perspective on volunteering (Section 6.4) focuses on the direct and indirect impact of volunteering on economy and employment. Governments, third parties and volunteers have the greatest interest in the economic perspective (Table 22). Bro-

kerage and opportunity development are the main functions within this perspective (Table 27).

#### **7.4.1 Primary functions: brokerage and developing volunteering opportunities**

##### *Brokerage*

Although brokerage is a primary function for volunteering infrastructure from both the welfare and economic perspectives on volunteering, each perspective takes a distinct view of how this function should be performed. From the welfare perspective, volunteers are a means of supporting service delivery, and brokerage focuses on recruiting and selecting volunteers who meet certain requirements. The brokerage process is exclusive: it stresses the interests of the organisation by selecting the best volunteers and excluding those who do not meet the organisation's requirements.

From the economic perspective, organisations that work with volunteers offer a means of social participation to individuals and groups. The brokerage process is inclusive: it stresses the interests of individuals and groups seeking to participate in society. It includes anyone and selects (or develops) opportunities that match the capacities and motivations of those seeking opportunities for participation.

The brokerage process begins as individuals approach actors within the volunteering infrastructure requesting appropriate participation opportunities. The first step of the process involves an exploration of the competencies and motivations of prospective volunteers. From the economic perspective, volunteering is often seen as a stepping stone along the path to education, employment, daytime activities, social networks or similar goals. In an investigation of the relationship between the volunteer activities of welfare clients and their feelings of individual empowerment, Cohen (2009) finds that clients engaged in volunteering have a greater sense of individual empowerment than do clients who are not engaged in such work (see also Kampen, 2010). Brokerage agencies help those who would like to participate by mapping the skills and knowledge that they would like to use or to gain, as well as by introducing individuals to the environments that best suit them. Following this step, agencies select opportunities that correspond to these demands. In some cases, organisations are incapable or unwilling to offer specific opportunities (e.g. if they require specific personal guidance, development of social skills or language courses). In such situations, brokerage agencies can offer or arrange special support. Because this type of brokerage process can be intensive and last for a considerable time, it can also be expensive. It demands specific qualities from the brokerage agency, in addition to the willingness to support their clients in fulfilling their role as volunteers and to support social workers in their efforts to stimulate social involvement. Social service agencies, employment offices, therapists and agencies for naturalisation or reintegration that encourage their clients to participate in society are particularly likely to attach considerable value to this type of coaching.

In addition to individuals, groups often seek opportunities for social participation. Examples include school-based community programmes, the community projects of service clubs and employee volunteering in the context of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes. One feature of this type of volunteering involves the simultaneous performance of an activity by a group of people for a limited period, thereby producing concrete results. For students, group volunteering is a means of learning civic skills. For service

clubs and employees, it can serve as a team-building or image-enhancing activity. For these types of parties, brokerage agencies can select organisations, develop appropriate opportunities or teach organisations how to benefit from the programmes of these parties. In some countries, the volunteering infrastructure promotes group volunteering nationally with special campaigns (e.g. Volunteering Day or Make a Difference Day). Group volunteering is more successful if the activities are appropriate to the capacities, motivations, agenda and goals of just that the group. Brokerage agencies can help to ensure that these success factors are met.

From the economic perspective on volunteering, the brokerage function places special demands on the brokerage agency's staff. They must explore the assets, competencies, talents and goals of prospective volunteers and identify opportunities or organisations that could benefit from them. In order to meet social-participation requests of people with special needs, the employees of a brokerage agency must be able to count upon the goodwill of volunteer administrators, and they must be creative in finding or devising appropriate volunteering opportunities.

### *Developing volunteering opportunities*

The economic perspective on volunteering focuses on the interests that people have in volunteering, whether individually or in groups. This perspective includes everyone who is interested in volunteering, with the goal of providing opportunities for social participation. This implies that people search for volunteering opportunities that are capacity-oriented (Davelaar and Veldhoen, 2008), meaning that opportunities make the best possible use of the capacities, skills and interests of prospective volunteers, while taking certain restrictions into account. These restrictions can have to do with age (e.g. students, retirees), disabilities, availability (e.g. incidental, flexible, short-term or long-term), language skills or the need for coaching.

At first glance, it would not seem to be in the interest of service-delivery NPOs to contribute to the development of capacity-oriented volunteering opportunities, particularly if these opportunities offer a supply of volunteers that they have not requested and that does not meet their actual need for volunteers. Actors within the volunteering infrastructure can help these NPOs to see the situation in a different light by helping them discover how their clients or their services can benefit from the capacities, skills and interests of these unsolicited groups. In this way, the inflow of early retirees and students (e.g. through school-based service community-service programmes) into volunteering in the past decade has generated new expressions of volunteering that are characterised by the capacities, skills and interests of these specific groups. The volunteering infrastructure can play a prominent role in developing new expressions of volunteering, thereby introducing 'fresh blood' into the volunteering community.

The production of new manifestations of volunteer effort requires expanding the current definition of volunteering, as determined primarily by NPOs. In some cases, these manifestations could even fall outside the broadest current definition, as when third parties (e.g. schools, judges, employment offices, companies, social service agencies or governments) enforce or impose participation in volunteering. Hustinx and colleagues (2009, 257) introduce the notion of 'guided volunteering' to refer to these contexts of volunteering. One feature of guided volunteering involves the liberalisation of two of the four basic

dimensions of volunteering: free choice/obligation and the extent of remuneration (Cnaan and colleagues, 1996).

#### **7.4.2 Secondary functions: good-practice development and marketing**

##### *Good-practice development*

The volunteering infrastructure can develop good practices related to coaching volunteers with special needs and make participation programmes more profitable for service-delivery organisations through the careful preparation of services for placing volunteers with special needs, as well as by ensuring the support of volunteer administrators when problems arise during the implementation of these programmes.

The economic perspective on volunteering focuses on the personal interests and assets of volunteers, with an emphasis on the empowerment of volunteers with special needs. Membership management can provide volunteer administrators with useful tools for the implementation of participation programmes. Service-delivery NPOs offer the appropriate environment for implementing participation programmes.

##### *Marketing*

From the economic perspective, the marketing activities of the volunteering infrastructure are targeted towards the organisations in which volunteers are active. Service-delivery NPOs have no direct interest in programmes that are focussed on encouraging the social participation of individuals or groups. At first glance, such programmes do little more than place heavy demands on organisations with regard to the position of clients, the special coaching required by these volunteers or shop-floor tensions between 'traditional' and 'new' volunteers (RMO, 1997a). The task of enabling group volunteering requires organisations to exert significant effort in the area of logistics. The goal of marketing activities is to dismantle the assumption that participation programmes are nothing but a burden for organisations. These programmes can also help people who are unlikely to volunteer spontaneously to discover the inherent value of volunteering, whereby they can ultimately be valuable for the organisation (Davis Smith and Gay, 2005; Tang and colleagues, 2009; Zimmeck, 2010).

#### **7.4.3 Tertiary functions: policy response & campaigning and strategic development of volunteering**

##### *Policy response & campaigning*

Parties that adhere to the economic perspective on volunteering place particular value on volunteering as a useful instrument for participative goals. In some cases, these parties are unaware of the burdens that their requests to contribute to participation programmes can place on organisations. Participation programmes are undeniably of considerable social value. In order to prevent organisations from exercising restraint with respect to their contributions to these programmes, the volunteering infrastructure can encourage them to impose conditions on their contributions, in addition to providing assistance in the definition of these conditions. At the same time, actors within the volunteering infrastructure can inform parties that are likely to have an interest in volunteering (according

to the economic perspective) about the conditions that make cooperation with organisations in this context profitable for both parties.

### *Strategic development of volunteering*

From the economic perspective on volunteering, the brokerage function assumes the availability of specific knowledge and skills within the volunteering infrastructure that differ from those assumed by the welfare perspective. The regional and national volunteering infrastructure can assist in the development of strategies to acquire and maintain these assets at the local level.

## **7.5 Volunteering infrastructure in the community perspective**

The community perspective on volunteering focuses on the potential of volunteering and civic engagement to enhance close neighbourhood relations, trust, social cohesion and reciprocity – the building blocks of social capital. The community perspective emphasises the interaction between volunteering, strong communities, social networks and the notion of ‘doing with’. Proximity and ‘doing with’ are features of the community perspective on volunteering. Within this perspective, the activities that citizens undertake with each other can be highly diverse, and their precise content actually does not matter. In this context, the intrinsic value of volunteering (e.g. reciprocity, the production of social networks and social capital) takes precedence over its extrinsic value (e.g. concrete services and activities). The community perspective expands the traditional notion of volunteering to include that which can be expressed in such terms as ‘volunteer effort’ or ‘civility’. These terms include both organised and informal forms of voluntary activity (Hutchison and Ockenden, 2008, 11). Ties to fellow citizens are the basis for help and support within the community perspective on volunteering (Hilger, 2006b, 19). Referring to Habermas’ lifeworld/system distinction (Habermas, 1981; Section 6.5.1) the community perspective focuses on the life world. This is in contrast to the altruistic concept of ‘doing for’ (according to Putnam [2000, 117], a feature of the welfare perspective on volunteering), in which direct ties to fellow citizens cannot be taken for granted. Service-delivery and mutual-support NPOs, governments, third parties and volunteers have the greatest interest in the community perspective (Table 22). The development of good practices and opportunities are the primary functions within this perspective (Table 27).

### **7.5.1 Primary functions: developing volunteering opportunities and good practice development**

#### *Developing volunteering opportunities*

Compared to the welfare perspective, the community perspective on volunteering ‘thinks the other way round’. The welfare perspective focuses on achieving the goals of NPOs and recruiting volunteers for service delivery; the community perspective focuses on the independence, responsibility, ownership, autonomy and assets of citizens and empowers them to solve their own problems or to realise their own plans with others by using their personal networks or by building new networks. From the community perspective, the volunteer infrastructure contributes to ‘developing volunteering opportunities’ by helping citizens to express their own wishes and plans with regard to their community, assisting

them in realising these wishes and plan with each other. The volunteering infrastructure thus fosters mutual support, self-help, reciprocity and the building of social networks amongst citizens. The community perspective coincides with the democratic perspective with regard to the role played by the volunteering infrastructure in supporting citizen initiatives (Section 7.3.2). In the community perspective initiatives have especially an instrumental character and in the democratic perspective a political or policy character.

As in the democratic perspective also in the community perspective actors within the local volunteering infrastructure can consult with initiators as they develop their plans, helping them to locate resources within their own environment, providing meeting places, premises and office facilities, creating networks among new initiatives and guiding them through the local social and political infrastructure. The local volunteering infrastructure can stimulate the establishment of neighbourhood committees or self-help groups, offer consultation and training to people who are helping to establish such initiatives. In addition, actors within the local volunteering infrastructure can provide assistance with funding applications and connect initiatives to programmes for corporate social responsibility or community service, as well as to community or other foundations (Section 4.7.5).

The volunteering infrastructure can stimulate the development of volunteering opportunities along the boundaries between formal and informal volunteering activities. Activities that express new forms of solidarity (e.g. buddy programmes, coaching) with people that are chronically ill, psychiatric or mental handicapped, in prison, integrating. These types of volunteering are characterised by reciprocity, equality ('doing-with'), flexibility with regard to the timing of activities and a strong personal touch (Galesloot, 2000).

#### *Good practice development*

In Section 7.5.1, the community perspective was characterised as 'thinking the other way round'. This approach imposes specific demands on professionals who work according to these principles. In the welfare perspective, the board or the volunteer administrator is usually responsible for determining the job descriptions for volunteers. They assess volunteers according to their suitability for specific jobs. The community perspective focuses on the independence and assets of citizens, respecting and supporting their desire to contribute to the community. The volunteering infrastructure empowers civic initiatives; it respects the ownership of initiatives and is careful not to take over responsibility from them. Even if the volunteering infrastructure offers no direct support in the local community, it can support community workers through coaching, networks and knowledge sharing. The volunteering infrastructure can also introduce community workers to the application of membership management (Meijs and Ten Hoorn, 2008), appreciative inquiry (Hammond, 1998), Asset-Based Community Development (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993) or other capacity-oriented methods.

### **7.5.2 Secondary functions: marketing and policy response & campaigning**

#### *Marketing*

The meaning of the community perspective to society lies in its intrinsic values: social cohesion, reciprocity and the production of trust, social networks and social capital. Parties interested in these values need not be familiar with the interaction between these values and volunteering. The values produce a positive attitude towards volunteering. At

the same time, volunteering contributes to the production of these values. Marketing activities carried out from within the volunteering infrastructure can generate public appreciation for the contributions of volunteering according to the community perspective.

#### *Policy response & campaigning*

As with the democratic perspective, the community perspective on volunteering accentuates civic engagement and participation. Measures that enhance civic engagement and participation stress the relation between the government and citizens and assume the independence and autonomy of citizens in relation to the government. In this, the perspective assumes that civic-engagement measures extend beyond the scope of volunteering-policy measures (Section 7.2.1). They express a vision of a society in which governments have high expectations of the responsibilities of citizens and in which they actually delegate certain responsibilities to citizens. Such a vision calls for administrators and managers who respect the ways in which citizens express their social engagement and responsibility. Just as in the democratic perspective (Section 7.3.2) Council members, local administrators or NPO managers who wish to foster civic engagement and civic participation in both the development and implementation of policies should be willing to accept the fact that citizens make their own decisions regarding the topics and areas in which they will (or will not) be engaged. These administrators and managers must also accept the fact that the choices of citizens may differ from their own preferences. The local volunteering infrastructure can campaign for conditions and measures that foster civic engagement and participation; if desired, the actors within the volunteering infrastructure can support the development and implementation of appropriate policies.

### **7.5.3 Tertiary Functions: brokerage and strategic development of volunteering**

#### *Brokerage*

The community perspective on volunteering promotes grassroots, self-help groups and citizen initiatives, membership associations, social networks and neighbourhood groups. This perspective is characterised by proximity, reciprocity, personal relations, as well as by such principles as 'knowing and being known' or 'doing with and for each other'. Brokerage services that are designed to connect parties that do not know each other are not needed in this context.

#### *Strategic development of volunteering*

A volunteering infrastructure that supports the community perspective on volunteering needs to have specific knowledge and skills at its disposal. In situations in which the local level is too small to provide the necessary quality or quantity of services, the regional or national volunteering infrastructure can assist in developing strategies to provide the specific knowledge and skills that are needed at the local level.

## 7.6 Strategies for the improvement of conditions

The discussion above provides a brief description of the range of activities that volunteer centres can use to perform each of the six functions. The actual range of activities that a given volunteer centre can provide is determined by the equipment (i.e. quality and number of staff; financial and technical means; supporting facilities) that is available to it. Section 5.2.4 advanced the argument that some local volunteer centres consider their equipment insufficient to meet the expectations of their clients properly. The following scenarios are proposed as a way of overcoming such insufficiencies.

*Collaboration amongst embedded volunteer centres and internal sections.* In many of the eight cases addressed in this study, local volunteer centres are embedded within larger local or regional organisations (Table 31). Examples include councils for voluntary service (England) or broad welfare associations (Germany and the Netherlands).

Table 31: Independent and embedded volunteer centres<sup>111</sup>

Country	Independent	Embedded
Denmark	100% (2007)	
England	60%	40% (1991)
Finland		100% (03/2006)
Germany	30%	70% (2002)
Italy	85%	15% (2005)
Netherlands	25%	75% (08/2001)
Norway	63%	37% (08/2008)
United States	46%	54% (04/2008)

Within these organisations, volunteer centres function as a business unit that is assigned 'from above' to perform some or all of the six functions by delivering a number of specific activities. In contrast to independent volunteer centres, embedded volunteer centres do not have their own boards or directors, being governed instead by the general directors or managers of the broader organisation. This reduces the ability of volunteer centre staff to develop their own mission statement, to build their own image and to conduct business directly and independently with external parties or funders. In such settings, the activities of volunteer centres must fit within the framework of their parent organisations. They have little freedom to develop their own policies.

On the other hand, embedded volunteer centres have greater security regarding their existence, and they have access to better equipment than do independent volunteer centres (Stubbe and Dijk, 2006, 21). Moreover, by tapping into the resources present in other sections of their organisations (whether incidentally or structurally), staff members in embedded volunteer centres also have the opportunity to realise the conditions necessary to ensure the proper performance of their functions. In situations in which access to these resources is only incidental, volunteer-centre staff members must create and maintain a sense of urgency within the broader organisation in order to guarantee the proper delivery of the activities that are needed to perform the functions that are specified by the dominant perspective on volunteering. This scenario calls for staff members in volunteer centres to be visionary, enterprising and convincing.

<sup>111</sup> The years in which these percentages were measured are included in brackets



*Collaboration amongst volunteer centres and other providers of local infrastructure.* The functions of the volunteering infrastructure can be dispersed over a number of different independent agencies. For example, the local volunteering infrastructure in Germany (Section 4.7.1) comprises a system of meeting points for self-help groups, community foundations and special volunteer centres for elderly people, in addition to the 'regular' volunteer centres. According to Jakob (2010, 255), professional and sustainable volunteering infrastructure is needed in order to strengthen civic engagement. Through collaboration, the independent providers of local infrastructure can pool their resources in order to serve the volunteering sector more effectively and efficiently. Such collaboration can also strengthen the positions of these entities as advocates, designers and operational agents of municipal policies with regard to civic engagement.

In the Netherlands, a number of volunteer centres are experiencing this scenario, collaborating or even merging (e.g. Almere, 2009; Apeldoorn, 2009; Arnhem, 2014; Breda, 2009) with local specialist bodies in such areas as sport, informal help or corporate social responsibility. Some of these centres contract their trainings out to professional educational institutes.

Volunteer centres can make a strong claim to the role of coordinator within the context of partnerships with external providers of local infrastructure. As functional bodies (Section 4.1.3), volunteer centres have the mission to promote volunteerism. They must therefore provide specific services to a broad range of parties. They are aware of the divergent (and sometimes conflicting) interests that various parties have in volunteering, and they are experienced in connecting these interests.

*Regional collaboration amongst local volunteer centres.* To ensure the proper performance of the functions specified by the dominant perspective on volunteering, volunteer centres operating within the same geographic area can join forces, draw upon each other's areas of specialisation, agree on the mutual assignment of tasks and enter joint contracts with external parties for specialised services. Regional collaboration allows small local volunteer centres to deliver activities and realise projects or conditions (e.g. IT) that exceed their own limited capacities. Howlett (2008, 12) observes that a number of volunteer centres in England began working in partnership in anticipation of the *Building on Success* initiative (Penberthy and Forster, 2004). In the Netherlands, local volunteer centres collaborate in dozens of regional networks of varying intensity. Some of these networks have their own legal bodies, receive governmental funding for joint activities and contract with external parties (e.g. educational institutes for the delivery of trainings). Other networks have an informal character and are focused on the mutual exchange of knowledge or advocating common interests. These regional networks form the base of NOVi, the Dutch national branch organisation for local volunteer centres, which has a special section within the Association of Dutch Voluntary Effort Organisations (NOV)<sup>112</sup>.

In this type of collaboration, the members of the network can assign responsibility for the six functions and the associated activities to regional steering committees or back offices. In this context, the division of tasks amongst the 4 inter-provincial, 65 provincial, 9 re-

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<sup>112</sup> Nederlandse Organisaties Vrijwilligerswerk

gional volunteer centres with 415 local front offices in Italy provides an interesting logistical example (Section 4.7.1).

*Collaboration of suburban volunteer centres around a single urban volunteer centre.* In situations in which all of the volunteer centres within a certain region are small and comparable with regard to their competencies, regional collaboration amongst these centres essentially amounts to 'more of the same'. In such cases, collaboration involving a better-equipped urban volunteer centre and smaller suburban volunteer centres is likely to offer more diversity in terms of competencies. Within such collaborations, suburban volunteer centres can rely upon their urban counterparts to provide services that are requested only incidentally in the suburbs, but more frequently in the urban area. The division of tasks amongst urban and suburban volunteer centres resembles the division of tasks between back and front offices or between second-tier and first-tier organisations. In this type of collaboration, the urban volunteer centre is the most appropriate party to coordinate the basic functions and to guarantee the delivery of the required activities.

*Division of tasks between local, regional and national volunteer centres.* In the eight cases addressed in this study, regional providers of volunteering infrastructure are operating in addition to the local volunteer centres. Each country has a national volunteer centre. Local, regional, and national volunteer centres can decide to collaborate and agree about the appropriate geographic level for the delivery of certain activities related to the six functions. Based on such agreements, volunteer centres at each geographical level can focus on providing services that are appropriate for their own levels, calling upon their counterparts at other geographical levels in order to respond to requests for services that exceed their capacity. Examples of activities that can have considerable incidental value at the local level, but which can exceed the regular capacities of local volunteer centres include the development of training courses, description of methods, performance of surveys or studies on volunteering, organisation of conferences and design of publicity campaigns (and the involvement of broadcasting corporations for such campaigns).

This scenario assumes that the local volunteer centre (as the most appropriate party for coordinating the six functions) can rely upon the support of regional or national volunteer centres. In some cases (e.g. Italy), however, local volunteer centres cannot be assumed to have the capacity to order and to control the delivery of specific activities, as such coordination is ultimately provided at the supra-local level.

## **7.7 Conclusions**

The preceding sections provide descriptions of the roles played by each of the six functions of the volunteering infrastructure according to each of the four perspectives on volunteering. The descriptions show that not all functions are needed in the same way and to the same extent from each perspective. In Table 32, the various functions are expressed in an order of importance for each perspective.

Table 32: Functions in order of importance for each perspective on volunteering

<b>Function/Perspective</b>	<b>Welfare</b>	<b>Democratic</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Community</b>
Brokerage	primary	tertiary	primary	tertiary
Marketing	primary	secondary	secondary	secondary
Good-practice development	secondary	primary	secondary	primary
Developing volunteering opportunities	secondary	primary	primary	primary
Policy response and campaigning	tertiary	primary	tertiary	secondary
Strategic development of volunteering	tertiary	tertiary	tertiary	tertiary

According to the description above, the performance of each function calls for specific activities. Each of these activities imposes specific demands on the staff (paid or volunteer), as well as on the logistical and financial equipment of the volunteering infrastructure. The activities needed for the realisation of the primary functions play a particularly important role in determining the equipment of the volunteering infrastructure.

As shown in Table 30, the relative importance of functions varies across the perspectives, as does the equipment of the volunteering infrastructure. This insight, combined with the dominant perspectives adopted within each of the eight cases addressed in this research (as shown in Table 25), can help to explain the differences existing between the volunteer centres in these cases (Chapter 5).

The discussion above also makes clear that a volunteering infrastructure that supports one of the four perspectives is not necessarily equipped to support the other perspectives on volunteering as well. The most prominent similarities and differences between the volunteering infrastructures needed for each perspective on volunteering are presented briefly in the following paragraphs.

*The welfare and economic perspective coincide on five of the six functions with regard to the order of importance of functions.* In general, a volunteering infrastructure that supports one of these perspectives is likely to have the basic equipment necessary to expand its support to the other perspective as well. The term 'basic' is used, as the focus of brokerage is different in each of these perspectives, thus calling for different approaches and skills. In addition, the welfare perspective focuses more sharply on marketing than does the economic perspective, which places more emphasis on developing volunteering opportunities. Volunteering infrastructures that are successful in operating according to these perspectives are similar in that they must both acquire the confidence and goodwill of the organisations in which volunteers are involved, particularly in the area of service delivery.

*The democratic and community perspectives coincide on five of the six functions with regard to the order of importance of functions.* In general, a volunteering infrastructure that supports one of these perspectives is likely to have the basic equipment necessary to expand its support to the other perspective as well. The word 'basic' appears here as well. Although opportunity development is a primary function in both perspectives, the focus is directed towards different groups, networks and goals. This does not necessarily mean, however, that a volunteering infrastructure that aspires to support both perspectives must meet specific requirements with regard to its equipment. The democratic perspective emphasises promoting ideas and influencing policies, while the community perspective emphasises supporting citizen initiatives and strengthening communities. For the community perspective, it is important for volunteering infrastructure to be con-

nected with initiatives in neighbourhoods. From the democratic perspective, policy response and campaigning is a primary function, while these tasks form a secondary function from the community perspective.

*Brokerage is a primary function from the welfare and economic perspectives.* From the welfare and economic perspectives, volunteering infrastructure connects prospective volunteers with organisations through brokerage, thereby creating a network amongst local organisations that involve volunteers.

*The democratic and community perspectives do not call for brokerage.* A volunteering infrastructure that supports the democratic or community perspective on volunteering does not perform brokerage, and it thus lacks equipment that is considered essential according to the welfare or economic perspectives.

*Developing volunteering opportunities is a primary function from the democratic, economic and community perspectives on volunteering.* From the democratic, economic and community perspectives, volunteering infrastructure helps citizens to express their capacities and motivations and to transfer them into voluntary action. A volunteering infrastructure operating according to the welfare perspective lacks this special orientation towards civic engagement or civic participation, and it must fill this gap if it aspires to operate according to one or more of the other three perspectives on volunteering.

From both the democratic and community perspectives, volunteering infrastructure offers meeting places and office facilities to civic initiatives, engages in consultation with organisation leaders and provides them with courses and trainings. The equipment and expertise needed in order to provide consultation and training is not present within a volunteering infrastructure that supports the welfare or economic perspectives on volunteering. Both must acquire the equipment necessary for this function if they aspire to support the democratic or community perspectives as well.

*Marketing is a primary function only in the welfare perspective.* From the democratic, economic and community perspectives on volunteering, marketing is a secondary function. Volunteering infrastructures operating according to these perspectives that aspire to support the welfare perspective as well must acquire the skills and networks required in order to perform the marketing function.

*Policy response and campaigning is a primary function only from the democratic perspective on volunteering.* From the welfare and economic perspectives, policy response and campaigning form a tertiary function, while they form a secondary function from the community perspective. If volunteering infrastructures supporting the welfare, economic or community perspectives aspire to support the democratic perspective on volunteering as well, they must acquire the equipment necessary for policy response and campaigning.

*Strategic development of volunteering is in all perspectives a tertiary function.* The finding that relatively little attention is paid to the issue of strategic development of volunteering as a vocation and as a sector is not surprising, given that such development is not a specific feature of the volunteering infrastructure. Clients are unlikely to pay for the development and performance of sector-specific activities. When organisations are faced with a scarcity of resources for performing their functions, the extent to which vocational interests will be addressed depends largely on the personal motivation of staff members

and their willingness to invest their own time and resources into these activities. Many of the vocational and sector activities that take place within the volunteering infrastructure have a regional or national character. The time and expenses associated with travelling to these events can impede volunteer centres with relatively small staffs from participating in activities oriented towards the strategic development of volunteering. For this reason, vocational and branch activities in many are limited to annual conferences of more than one day, usually organised by the national branch association. Attendance at these conferences is usually quite high.



# 8 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

## 8.1 Introduction

The topic of this dissertation is the phenomenon of volunteering infrastructure: its simultaneous establishment in different countries, the similarities and differences in its appearance, the functions that it provides and the importance that stakeholders ascribe to these functions. These topics are translated in the following questions:

- Why has volunteering infrastructure been established simultaneously in many countries?
- Which functions does the volunteering infrastructure provide in various countries?
- How is volunteering infrastructure defined?
- What factors led to the development of volunteering infrastructure in many countries, countries with widely varying institutional settings?
- Why do stakeholders and financiers appear particularly interested in brokerage and less in the long-term delivery of a number of coherent functions?
- Why do stakeholders and financiers ascribe little importance to hallmarks for measuring the quality of the functions provided by the volunteering infrastructure?

Three lines of research were followed in order to find answers to these questions.

*First research line:* As discussed in Chapter 3, the first question is explored by describing the dynamics of the field of volunteering since the 1970s. This description distinguishes three parties, each of which has its own (in some cases, divergent) expectations of volunteering. The volunteering infrastructure responds to these expectations and connects them.

*Second research line:* The case study of eight countries (Chapter 4) provides answers to the second and third questions. The case study confirms that these divergent expectations provided the primary impetus for the establishment of volunteering infrastructure. It also provides data that can be used to construct a definition, which includes a description of six functions that are considered characteristic for local volunteering infrastructure.

*Third research line:* The *study of governmental volunteering policies* (Chapter 4) reveals four different arguments for promoting volunteering. Academic support has been found for each of these arguments or perspectives on volunteering (Chapter 6). Connecting these four perspectives on volunteering with the social origin theory developed by Salamon and Anheier (1998) reveals that each of the four nonprofit regimes distinguished by Salamon and Anheier exhibits a preference for a specific perspective on volunteering. The interface between the results of the first and second research lines ultimately provides answers to the fourth and fifth research questions (Chapter 7).

## 8.2 Conclusion

The answers to the five questions listed above and elaborated throughout this dissertation suggest two main conclusions. First, the answers to the first three questions can be used to draft a design of volunteering infrastructure. Second, the answers to the last two questions make it possible to distinguish four perspectives on volunteering and to indicate a correlation between these perspectives and the functions of volunteering infrastructure.

*Design of volunteering infrastructure:* The thorough description of the origins and functions of volunteering infrastructure in eight countries (Chapter 4) has been used to design a template for volunteering infrastructure (Section 4.5.3). Volunteering infrastructure is defined as follows:

agencies that have the mission to support volunteers, volunteer-involving organisations and volunteering in general. Volunteering infrastructure is characterised by the provision of six functions: brokerage, the marketing of volunteering, the development of good practices, the development of volunteering opportunities and the strategic development of volunteering, as well as policy response and campaigning.

To the best of my knowledge, the description of volunteering infrastructure and the template for volunteering infrastructure has received little academic attention to date. This line of research has provided answers to the first three research questions.

*Correlation between the performance of volunteering infrastructure and four different perspectives on volunteering:* The volunteering infrastructures in the eight countries investigated in this study differ from each other with regard to the performance of their characteristic functions (Chapter 5). This finding generated a new line of research (Chapter 6), which resulted in the distinction of four perspectives on volunteering: the welfare, democratic, economic and community perspectives. The search for scientific evidence of these four perspectives on volunteering led to various lines of theoretical reasoning, including the Social Origin Theory developed by Salamon and Anheier (1998). This theory distinguishes between liberal, social democratic, corporatist and statist nonprofit regimes. According to this line of reasoning, each nonprofit regime tends to emphasise one of the four perspectives on volunteering. The study reveals that each perspective expresses a specific view of the relationship between citizens and the government. The volunteering infrastructure is expected to support a specific view of the relationship between citizens and government. This follow-up study explained why volunteering infrastructures in the eight countries investigated in this research differ from each other, thus providing answers to the last two research questions.

## 8.3 Discussion

The observation that governmental volunteering policies can express any of four different expectations of volunteering has implications that go far beyond the interests of the volunteering infrastructure alone. As mentioned in Chapter 3, parties other than volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations have also begun to show interest in volunteering,



including educational systems, judges, therapists, corporations, service clubs and even governments. The growing interest of governments in volunteering coincides with their increasing support for the concept of civil society. Governments in England ('Big Society'; Cotterill, Richardson and Moseley, 2012), Germany ('*Bürgerschaftliches Engagement-politik*'<sup>113</sup>; Olk and colleagues, 2010) and the Netherlands ('*Kanteling*'<sup>114</sup>; Invoering WMO, 2011) are seeking a new balance between the responsibilities that the civil society can bear on its own and the care and support that the state must provide to its citizens. Increasing public expenditures are urging governments to shift responsibilities from the state to civil society. The insight that volunteering provides 'fuel' for a civil society can motivate governments to implement policies that promote and support volunteering.

By pursuing a stronger civil society, governments are implicitly expressing expectations of volunteering that extend far beyond the mere delivery of services. This research (Chapter 6) has categorised these expectations into four perspectives on volunteering:

- The *welfare perspective* expects greater civic involvement in the area of service delivery;
- The *democratic perspective* expects citizens to provide more input into the political system, to raise their voices;
- The *economic perspective* aims for an inclusive society, in which each citizen can participate and contribute, whether through paid or unpaid work;
- The *community perspective* focuses on strong communities, in which citizens trust each other and feel safe, help each other according to the principle of reciprocity and develop social capital;

The impact of these perspectives on volunteering for organisations that involve volunteers should not be underestimated. Depending upon the prevailing perspective (or perspectives), governmental volunteering policies expect volunteer-involving organisations to manage their volunteers in different ways (Chapter 7). In this regard, the term 'perspective' is deliberately used in both the singular and the plural form, as governments often expect volunteer-involving organisations to respond to multiple perspectives simultaneously. In this way, the results of this study expose the current complexity of volunteer involvement and volunteer management. Policymakers who are involved with the topic of volunteering could profit from this knowledge.

The paragraphs below present several practical examples in order to illustrate this complexity for each perspective.

The *welfare perspective on volunteering* expects organisations to increase civic involvement in the delivery of their services. Organisations can meet this expectation by adopting volunteer policies with regard to recruiting volunteers and marketing volunteering or by restructuring the division of tasks amongst volunteers and paid staff. Recruiting measures are aimed at providing information to prospective volunteers about volunteering opportunities, as well as about the requirements that they must meet and the personal interests that they can realise by volunteering. One limitation of recruiting measures is that they appeal only individuals who are interested in the opportunity that is offered (or in the requirements and conditions thereof). Marketing measures can eliminate

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<sup>113</sup> Active citizenship policy

<sup>114</sup> 'The shift'

this restriction. Through discussion with target groups of potential volunteers, focusing on factors that might discourage them from volunteering, organisations can learn how to make volunteering opportunities more attractive. Volunteer job profiles are often designed according to the interests of the organisation or based on tasks that paid employees are unable or unwilling to perform. A different type of profile can emerge when volunteer administrators proceed from the talents and assets of volunteers or from their commitment to the mission of the organisation, discussing the conditions under which the volunteers wish to be available. Such 'asset-based volunteer policies' (Davelaar and Veldboer, 2008) can conflict with the prevalent division of paid and unpaid jobs, if prospective volunteers perceive the current job profiles for volunteers to overcharge or undercharge their availability. In a civil society, volunteer policies should revolve around the assets of citizens, and not around the positions of paid employees. This perspective calls for a revolution in the thoughts of NPO professionals and civil servants (Lans, 2010; Linders, 2010).

The *democratic perspective on volunteering* expects volunteering to contribute to an expressive civil society in which citizens have the opportunity to express their social, cultural and political engagement, in which they feel free to raise their voices on issues that concern them and in which they can influence the shape of their society. In developed countries that strive to achieve a civil society, it is a matter of course for regimes to invite citizens to express their engagement and provide them with legal measures for raising their voices. The democratic perspective is particularly relevant – and sometimes even urgent – in transitional and developing countries, in which the realisation of the democratic perspective on volunteering can be considered a precondition for the three other perspectives (UNV, 2011a, xx; UNVb, 2011). The fact that representatives of the new volunteering infrastructure in European transitional countries have called for 'laws on volunteering' (Section 6.3.2.3) illustrates that citizens in these countries lack the sense of security that they need in order to express their engagement and raise their voices. This example explains why support for the democratic perspective on volunteering is provided by external rather than internal volunteering infrastructure agencies. In transitional and developing countries, the democratic and community perspectives can be compatible. The community perspective works from the bottom up to create conditions that facilitate the performance of the democratic perspective. As people in developing countries learn to build up their communities and to manage their natural resources commonly, they develop civic virtues, mutual trust and social capital – qualities that are a precondition for the establishment of a democratic society (WRR, 2010, 265).

The *economic perspective on volunteering* expects volunteering to contribute to an inclusive civil society that provides every citizen – regardless of social, ethnic, physical, intellectual, psychological limitations – with opportunities for social participation (Rochester and colleagues, 2010, 190). In particular, volunteer-involving organisations are expected to provide such opportunities. Structural unemployment and the high demands placed on employees by the labour market are causing many people to experience either temporary or long-term exclusion from paid employment. Work – whether paid or unpaid – appears to be an important means of social participation and integration. It also provides social networks and a meaningful life. When paid work is scarce or unattainable for some groups, volunteering is often considered as a second-best option (Rifkin, 1995, 236). For some, it can serve as a leg-up to a paid job, while for others it is an alternative to paid employment and a means of social inclusion. The economic perspective poses a dilemma for many volunteer-involving organisations. On the one hand, additional volunteers are

always welcome; on the other hand, volunteers with special needs do not always meet the requirements of the existing volunteer job profiles. Furthermore, the involvement of such volunteers requires special attention and guidance, which is not available or affordable for every organisation. Volunteering opportunities for people with special needs can be increased with support from volunteer centres, as well as from the social workers that usually work with these populations. Agents in volunteer centres have an overview of available volunteering opportunities, and social workers are aware of the assets that their clients possess. Together, these two groups of practitioners can determine which opportunities best match the available assets. For situations that call for special attention with regard to orientation and on-the-job guidance, such assistance should be provided by the social worker. Another option would be to delegate at least part of these tasks to volunteers, with social workers providing appropriate training and supervision. Offering this type of preconditions to volunteer-involving organisations could help to increase their willingness to involve volunteers with special needs.

The *community perspective on volunteering* expects a reciprocal civil society with strong communities and networks, in which citizens feel safe, trust and care for each other, and manage collective provisions (Putnam and colleagues, 2003). In contrast to the welfare perspective, which operates in the system world, the community perspective occurs in the lifeworld (Section 6.5.1). The mode of volunteering in two worlds differs. In the system world, volunteering is based on specific programmes. Volunteers commit themselves to performing at least some part of these programmes, and they must therefore meet certain requirements. In most cases, there is no personal relationship between volunteers and the recipients of their services. In the lifeworld, volunteer effort is based on 'membership', which involves belonging to the same community, neighbourhood, church, club, social network or association (Meijs and Hoogstad, 2001; Lans, 2010, 78). The emphasis in this world is less on 'volunteers' or 'volunteering' than it is on members, neighbours, acquaintances, colleagues or other commonalities, all of whom share a certain extent of familiarity with each other and are in some way conscious of their mutual dependence. In the life world, volunteer effort is informal. Instead of being based on some programme or formal agreement, such efforts emerge according to proximity and reciprocity – from knowing and being known. The community perspective assumes a certain degree of inescapable social control; all 'members' are expected to contribute to the community, in addition to being entitled to receive support from that community. The community perspective is dependent upon factors that encourage and facilitate the efforts of citizens to engage in collective action or to attend to their common interests (e.g. meeting places, safe public spaces, mutual trust, supportive civil servants, leadership capacities). It also depends upon factors related to the assets of the 'members' and other resources that are present within the community, as well as the capacity to tap these resources (Frieling, 2008). Such factors are not evenly distributed over communities. The efforts of actors that provide volunteering infrastructure, or those of community centres, charities or local governments can enable the community perspective on volunteering, even in communities or networks that lack essential success factors (Flache and Koekoek, 2009).

The results of this research could help policymakers to distinguish between the various goals that they can achieve with volunteering policies. They also indicate the means that are needed in order to pursue the preferred goal.

## 8.4 Limitations

In this section, a number of limitations to this research are enumerated.

*Case study:* The findings of this research are based on a case study of eight different countries, all of which support a civil society. The research data on volunteering infrastructure available in the eight countries were quite diverse. A modest body of literature exists on the research topic, based on a limited number of key figures concerning the promotion of volunteering in a limited number of countries. Much of this information includes anecdotal, one-sided 'assignment' reports (e.g. annual reports) and single-function articles. The number of international forums within which to submit the findings of such research was also limited. It was therefore not possible to provide a comparative country study.

*Complexity:* The research runs along three chronological lines. First, I distinguished the various parties that have interests (in some cases, diverging) in volunteering. I then presented a field of interests and forces in order to explain the need for volunteering infrastructure. The second step involved describing the development of volunteering infrastructure in eight cases. In the third step, I identified four discourses on civic engagement that are useful for explaining the current societal interest in volunteering, followed by the elaboration of the impact of these interests on volunteering. Because the relative value of each of these three lines of research shifted during the course of preparing this dissertation, the interrelationships between the lines are not consistent. For example, the development of volunteering infrastructure in the eight cases became less important as the research progressed.

*Validity and generalisability:* Given the diversity of volunteering policies in the eight countries addressed in this research, the findings can be considered representative of developed countries that support a civil society. In this case, 16 of the 35 countries participating in the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (Salamon and colleagues, 2003, 5) are developed countries. Social Origin Theory (applied in Chapter 6) relies heavily on data derived from the Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project. It is important to consider that these findings can not necessarily be generalised to other countries (e.g. transitional, post-communist countries in Europe or developing countries in Asia, Africa or South America). The cultures and regimes in these countries differ from those in developed Western countries, and the establishment of a civil society is neither self-evident nor explicitly pursued

*Performance of volunteering infrastructure:* This study merely describes functions that are characteristic of the volunteering infrastructure. It does not provide data about the methods and results with which the volunteering infrastructures in the selected eight countries provide these functions. For example, with regard to brokerage, the Recruitment and Referral Continuum (Figure 2, Section 3.3.2) developed by Graff (1997, 32) indicates the breadth of the brokerage function. As discussed in Section 7.4.1, the brokerage function within the welfare perspective on volunteering excludes those who do not meet the organisation's requirements, while the same function within the economic perspective aspires to include anyone.

*Completeness, comparability and scientific reliability:* The information about volunteering infrastructure gathered through the eight case studies addressed in this research does

not allow any comprehensive conclusions regarding the performance of volunteer centres. To date, no benchmarks are available for comparing the performance of volunteer centres, whether individually or by country. The 2001 and 2003 Volunteer Center Surveys (Brudney 2003; 2005b) conducted by the Points of Lights Foundation provide a starting point for such benchmarks. These surveys provide data about factors that influence the success of a number of volunteer-centre operations. In general, very little information is available on the provision of the six functions that are characteristic of the volunteering infrastructure.

*Providers of volunteering infrastructure:* This research focuses only on volunteer centres – agencies that have been exclusively providing volunteering infrastructure, especially on the local level, since the 1970s. The results of this study indicate that, in addition to volunteer centres, other agencies can provide volunteering infrastructure. For example, the volunteering infrastructure of Germany (Section 4.7.1) is provided by a patchwork of organisations that support volunteering, albeit somewhat less exclusively than is the case with volunteer centres. In England, there is little clear evidence that volunteer centres are taking advantage of the increasing governmental support for volunteering (Howlett, 2008, 14; Zimmeck, 2010, 130; Taylor, 2012, 21): current governmental policies ascribe an important community-empowerment role to the ‘community sector’ and Councils for Voluntary Service. At the international level, the ‘State of the World’s Volunteerism Report’ issued by the United Nations suggests that various agencies are supporting volunteerism.

*Internal and external providers of volunteering infrastructure:* The research focuses only on volunteering-infrastructure providers in countries that aim to achieve and maintain a civil society. These agencies are part of the institutional context of these countries, and they can be classified as ‘internal volunteering-infrastructure providers’. This classification is introduced in order to distinguish these providers from the ‘external volunteering-infrastructure providers’ that are present in transitional and developing countries, whose regimes do not explicitly pursue a civil society. Examples of external providers of volunteering infrastructure include the United Nations Volunteers programme, the World Bank’s Civil Society Fund or Civil Society Sponsorship Programme (World Bank, 2009, xvi); development-aid programmes provided by Western countries, NPOs and Corporate Social Responsibility policies (Rifkin, 2004, 280; Helmsing and Knorringa, 2009; Section 6.3.2). This research does not examine external providers of volunteering infrastructure.

*Validity of Social Origin Theory:* Social Origin Theory is based on an empirical case involving eight countries (Salamon and Anheier, 1998). A later study (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2001) expands the investigation to 24 countries. The validity of this study relies heavily upon this theory and is therefore restricted to these 24 countries.

*Delivery of services:* Social Origin Theory focuses on the size of the nonprofit sector, specifically with regard to the delivery of services. In statist nonprofit regimes, ‘limited government social welfare protection does not translate into high levels of nonprofit action’ (Salamon and Anheier, 1998, 229). The fact that statist regimes neither explicitly support nor promote volunteering with regard to the delivery of services does not necessarily mean that volunteering as such is either absent or lacking support in such countries.

*Language restriction:* Due to the restriction of researcher’s command of languages, only English, German and Dutch resources were consulted for this study.

## 8.5 Recommendations

### 8.5.1 Recommendations for practice

The results of the research are particularly relevant for practitioners working within the volunteering infrastructure, for the makers of volunteering policies and for parties that are planning to establish a volunteering infrastructure.

*Practitioners working within the volunteering infrastructure:* The results of this research reveal the absence of an explicit philosophy at the root of the development of volunteering infrastructure. The first volunteer centres were established for pragmatic reasons. The decreasing influence of social environments (e.g. families, neighbourhoods, churches and employers) on the individual life course and the increase of individual freedom and self-determination have diminished the state of belonging to a social-cultural environment as a motive for engagement. Instead, people have begun to seek new topics or projects that offer opportunities for involvement and participation and that match their own level of commitment. Because of these developments, volunteer-involving organisations – which are losing their traditional channels of recruitment – are looking to volunteer centres as an alternative means of meeting their need for volunteers.

As mediating agencies, volunteer centres initially met the interests of two parties: volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations. As demonstrated by the description of the development of volunteer centres, these two interests do not necessarily correspond. They diverge from – and, in some cases, contradict – each other. Most volunteer centres chose to serve the interests of both clients, attempting to balance the respective needs of their client groups through their services. The mediating role of volunteer centres manifests the transformation of volunteering. Volunteer centres express that the willingness to volunteer is not decreasing, but that people are seeking volunteering opportunities that correspond to their own interests and personal conditions. Volunteer centres encourage volunteer-involving organisations to make their opportunities more appropriate to the expectations of contemporary prospective volunteers.

Although volunteer centres in many countries are undoubtedly providers of local volunteering infrastructure, this study has shown that, in many cases, their equipment or position is inadequate to support the provision of services in support of all four perspectives on volunteering. Because of the increasing interest in the concept of the civil society in modern Western countries, the simultaneous realisation of different perspectives on volunteering is likely to gain additional support in the coming years. Volunteer centres that aspire to make an essential contribution to the simultaneous realisation of different perspectives will need additional means. They could acquire these means by cooperating with other infrastructure-providing organisations, especially those operating within the voluntary and community sector.

*Volunteer administrators in volunteer-involving organisations:* The interests that different parties have in volunteering (Chapter 6) have some level of influence on the operations of volunteer administrators. If they comply with all of these interests, volunteer administrators risk entering a field of forces they cannot control (Table 33).

Table 33: Forces within which volunteer administrators must function

<i>Interests of NPOs and NGOs</i>	<b>Volunteer administrator</b>	<i>Interests of current and prospective volunteers</i>
<i>Interests of third parties</i>		<i>Interests of the government</i>

The results of this research can help volunteer administrators to identify the specific expectations of volunteering held by each of these parties and to determine whether and how they can meet these expectations. The distinction between four perspectives on volunteering can help volunteer administrators to identify which perspective is dominant in their operations, and it can encourage them to consider whether the application of other perspectives on volunteering could increase civic involvement within their organisations.

*Volunteer-involving organisations:* The findings of this research could be of interest to the governing boards of volunteer-involving organisations for at least five reasons. First, the identification of different parties that have expectations of volunteering while being able to help organisations realise their goals could help boards and directors to manage the expectations and contributions of these parties. Second, the distinction between the inclusive (expressive) and exclusive (instrumental) styles of volunteering (Table 29) has implications for the recruitment policies of volunteer-involving organisations. Those struggling with a persistent shortage of volunteers could benefit from adopting inclusive styles of volunteering. Organisations that are in need of volunteers who meet specific requirements could benefit from adopting exclusive styles of volunteering. Third, the distinction between four perspectives on volunteering could make boards (or individual directors) aware of the opportunities and limitations of the specific perspective that they have adopted, and it can encourage them to examine whether and how the application of other perspectives could contribute to the realisation of their organisational goals. Fourth, the preference of a nonprofit regime for a specific perspective on volunteering (Table 24) is reflected in that regime through the division of responsibilities between the for-profit, governmental and nonprofit sectors. It is thus also reflected in the ideas about the boundaries between voluntary and paid work. Transitions from one nonprofit regime to another generate transitions in ideas about the boundaries between voluntary and paid work. This insight could help the boards of volunteer-involving organisations (or individual directors) to understand and manage such transitions. Fifth, this research could help the boards or directors of volunteer-involving organisations to identify the complexity of their volunteer policies and to determine the preconditions for these policies, including the need for a volunteer administrator (whether paid or unpaid) and the requirements that such an administrator should be expected to meet.

*Policymakers in the field of volunteering:* The identification of the parties that are interested in volunteering and the distinction between four perspectives on volunteering could be helpful for officials who make volunteering policies. The results of this research could help them to sharpen the definition of the goals for volunteering policy and to improve their ability to determine which means are needed in order to realise these goals.

*Countries that are planning to establish a volunteering infrastructure:* To date, countries aspiring to build a volunteering infrastructure have usually copied the practices of some arbitrarily chosen country. The connection that this research has made between the four perspectives on volunteering and social origin theory could help these countries to identify their preferred perspective on volunteering and to build an infrastructure that is specifically equipped to realise their preferred perspective.

### **8.5.2 Recommendations for future research**

In the interest of manageability, I regularly chose to ignore interesting questions during the course of this research. It is my hope that others will be inspired to investigate these questions.

*Performance of volunteering infrastructure:* As previously noted, this study merely describes functions that are characteristic of the volunteering infrastructure. It does not provide or compare data about the methods and results with which the volunteering infrastructures in the selected eight countries perform these functions. It would be interesting to determine the extent to which the manner in which the brokerage function is provided in one country (e.g. Finland) resembles that in another country (e.g. the United States). In a recent comparison of Norwegian and Danish volunteering infrastructure, Lorentzen and Henriksen (2011, 2) identify differences in the performance of the brokerage function. According to their report, Norwegian volunteer centres recruit volunteers for their own projects and are 'a competing actor on the local civic scene, while Danish centres evolved into infrastructure units that support existing voluntary organizations'. This revelation calls for further research.

*Benchmarks:* To date, no benchmarks are available for comparing the performance of volunteering infrastructures. Research on the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations of the volunteering infrastructure would meet a true need within the volunteering infrastructure.

*Provision of volunteering infrastructure:* The focus of this research is on agencies that have been exclusively providing volunteering infrastructure, especially at the local level. As demonstrated by the results, agencies other than volunteer centres can also provide volunteering infrastructure. Further research is needed on the goals, methods and results of these agencies.

*The distinction between the internal and external provision of volunteering infrastructure:* The results of this research indicate that external agencies also provide volunteering infrastructure, particularly in transitional and developing countries. It would be interesting to examine the functions, methods and results of this external volunteering infrastructure and to determine the extent to which the functions of such external providers correspond to those of the agencies addressed in my research.

*Four perspectives on volunteering:* Governmental policies in the eight cases addressed in this research reflect four distinct perspectives on volunteering. Although the *State of the World's Volunteerism Report 2011* (UNV, 2011a) supports these four perspectives on volunteering, further research is needed in order to determine the extent to which the distinction between these perspectives is exhaustive and to identify the scope of its international and scientific applicability. Assuming that the four perspectives on volunteering distinguished in this study are valid in contexts extending well beyond the eight cases addressed in this research, further study is needed to determine whether providers of external volunteering infrastructure are inspired by any or all of these specific perspectives on volunteering.

*Broadening Social Origin Theory:* The validity of Social Origin Theory applies for a limited number of countries and focuses particularly on the welfare perspective of volunteering



(delivery of services). The validity of my findings will increase as Social Origin Theory is validated through research in more countries.

*The impact of the four perspectives on volunteering on volunteer managers:* This study has devoted only limited attention to volunteer management. Volunteer managers operate in settings in which they have to deal with the expectations of their own organisations, their volunteers and third parties (including the expectations of governments, as expressed in the four perspectives on volunteering). It would be interesting to investigate the implications of functioning within such a force field for volunteer managers with regard to skills, competences and support.



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# 10 a. SUMMARY

## Research questions

Since the 1970s, initiatives intended to promote and support volunteering in general have emerged in various countries. It is interesting to note that governments have played a significant role in initiating measures to support volunteer involvement. Prior to the 1970s, volunteer involvement had been the exclusive domain of organisations that work with volunteers. Since then, governments (in some countries, in a common effort with volunteer-involving organisations) have begun to invest in the establishment of national, regional and local volunteer centres, which together comprise that which is known as the 'volunteering infrastructure'. This dissertation focuses on the development of this volunteering infrastructure since the 1970s. It centres on the following questions:

- *What factors led to the simultaneous and independent establishment of volunteer centres in many countries with widely varying institutional settings?*
- *What is the definition of volunteer centres?*
- *Which functions do volunteer centres provide?*
- *Do volunteer centres in the investigated countries provide the same functions? If they do not, how can the differences be explained?*
- *Do stakeholders ascribe importance to hallmarks for measuring the quality of the functions provided by the volunteering infrastructure?*

## Main conclusions

In an effort to define the phenomenon of 'volunteering infrastructure', this study commences with an investigation of the causes, development and functions of local volunteer centres in eight countries (Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States). The primary finding of based on these initial results is that, since the 1970s, various parties have developed an interest in volunteering. These parties include volunteers, volunteer-involving organisations and governments, as well as a variety of 'third parties' (e.g. schools, judges, therapists, social workers and companies). Each of these parties is characterised by its own unique interests. Independent agencies are needed in order to align these various – and, in some cases, conflicting – interests with regard to volunteering. With this finding, the study provides an explanation for the establishment of volunteer centres.

The description of the development of volunteer centres in different countries provided sufficient data to justify a general definition of volunteer centres as 'agencies that have the mission to support volunteers, volunteer-involving organisations and volunteering in general'. Volunteer centres are characterised by the provision of six functions: brokerage, the marketing of volunteering, the development of good practices, the development of volunteering opportunities and the strategic development of volunteering, as well as policy response and campaigning. The precision and acceptance of this definition was en-

hanced through discussions with staff members of volunteer centres and researchers investigating the volunteering infrastructure.

Despite the prevailing consensus regarding this definition (which actually provides a template for a volunteering infrastructure), differences can be observed with regard to the functions provided by the volunteering infrastructures in the countries that were investigated. This dissertation offers four preliminary explanations for the observed differences, which could be traced largely to differences in the institutional settings of the various countries. To supplement these explanations, a new line of research was developed in order to elaborate on the motives that governments have for promoting volunteering. Analysis of governmental volunteering policies in the eight countries included in this study reveals that governments generally adopt one of four distinct perspectives on volunteering:

- The welfare perspective, which focuses on the role of volunteers in the provision of services;
- The democratic perspective, which stresses the role of civic engagement, volunteering and associations in shaping the political conduct of society;
- The economic perspective, which focuses on the impact of volunteering on the economy, employment and social inclusiveness;
- The community perspective, which addresses the potential of volunteering and civic engagement to enhance close neighbourhood relations and trust, thus ultimately building social capital.

The search for scientific evidence of these four perspectives on volunteering led to various lines of theoretical reasoning, including Social Origin Theory developed by Salamon and Anheier (1998). This theory distinguishes between liberal, social democratic, corporatist and statist nonprofit regimes. According to this line of reasoning, each nonprofit regime tends to emphasise one of the four perspectives on volunteering. Liberal regimes stress the service function of volunteering (welfare); social democratic regimes accentuate active citizenship and social cohesion (democracy); corporatist regimes support the service function (welfare) of volunteering, while also acknowledging that volunteering strengthens social cohesion (community) and contributes to civic engagement (democracy). Statist regimes do not pay special attention to the promotion of volunteering.

This finding provides two new (and fundamental, with regard to this research) explanations for differences amongst the volunteering infrastructures observed in the countries investigated in this study. First, following the lines of Social Origin Theory, the nonprofit regimes in these countries differ from each other; their preferences for specific perspectives on volunteering therefore differ as well. Second, the study reveals that the six functions that are characteristic of volunteering infrastructure, the various perspectives on volunteering do not require all of these functions in the same way or to the same extent.

For example, the brokerage function is apparently of vital importance from within the welfare perspective on volunteering, although it is of only minor importance within the community perspective. Each perspective places its own degree of emphasis on the six functions of the volunteering infrastructure. For each perspective, the weight of these accents can be expressed in an order of importance (Table 32).



Table 32: Functions in order of importance for each perspective on volunteering

<b>Function/Perspective</b>	Welfare	Democratic	Economic	Community
Brokerage	<i>primary</i>	<i>tertiary</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>tertiary</i>
Marketing	<i>primary</i>	<i>secondary</i>	<i>secondary</i>	<i>secondary</i>
Good-practice development	<i>secondary</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>secondary</i>	<i>primary</i>
Developing volunteering opportunities	<i>secondary</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>primary</i>
Policy response and campaigning	<i>tertiary</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>tertiary</i>	<i>secondary</i>
Strategic development of volunteering	<i>tertiary</i>	<i>tertiary</i>	<i>tertiary</i>	<i>tertiary</i>

As shown in Table 32, each perspective on volunteering places different demands on the volunteering infrastructure. With regard to this conclusion, it is important to note that the order of importance specified in Table 32 is based on anecdotal evidence empirical knowledge. Further research is necessary in order to provide scientific, empirical support for this conclusion.

Table 32 further shows that the functions that the volunteering infrastructure must provide in order to support the welfare and economic perspectives on volunteering differ significantly from those needed in order to support the democratic and community perspectives. The figure also reveals considerable similarities between the volunteering-infrastructure functions that support the welfare and economic perspectives, as well as between those that support the democratic and community perspectives.

This finding offers a plausible explanation for the differences observed between the volunteering infrastructures of the eight countries that are subject of this research, thus leading to the conclusion that the notion of a single template for volunteering infrastructure should be replaced by four templates: one to support each perspective on volunteering.

In this dissertation, these four templates are designed and elaborated for each perspective on volunteering, identifying the services, equipment or specific expertise that the volunteering infrastructure should include in order to provide each of the six functions. This elaboration shows that, with modest adjustments, an infrastructure that supports the welfare perspective could also support the economic perspective (or vice versa). Similar reasoning could be applied with regard to infrastructures supporting the democratic or community perspectives on volunteering. At the same time, it is obvious that infrastructures supporting the welfare or economic perspectives would require substantial adjustments in order to support the democratic or community perspectives (and vice versa).

## **Structure of the dissertation**

The research reported in this dissertation provides insight into the development and functions of volunteering infrastructure. It aspires to reduce the gap in academic knowledge on this subject. Chapter 2 reports the results of an initial search for literature on volunteering infrastructure, which yielded only 11 academically relevant publications, and describes the research methodology. Chapter 3 describes general developments that lead to the establishment of volunteer centres.

Chapter 4 focuses on the concept of volunteering infrastructure, presenting the specific reasons why volunteer centres were established in each of the eight countries included in this investigation. It further describes the future prospects for the volunteering infrastructures in these countries. Chapter 5 focuses on the functions that are actually provided by volunteer centres in the eight countries, comparing these functions to the template for a volunteering infrastructure and noting deviations from this template. It also provides four explanations for these deviations. To supplement these four explanations, which are derived from differences amongst the institutional contexts of the eight countries, Chapter 6 develops a new line of research that elaborates on the observation that volunteering policies in these countries are motivated by four different perspectives on volunteering (Chapter 4). This elaboration results into two new (and highly relevant, in the context of this research) explanations for the differences between the template for volunteering infrastructure and the actual performances of these infrastructures. Drawing upon Social Origin Theory, which distinguishes four nonprofit regimes, the chapter demonstrates that each nonprofit regime prefers a specific perspective on volunteering. Because the eight countries included in this research have different nonprofit regimes, their preferences for one of the four perspectives on volunteering differ as well. Volunteer centres in the eight countries must therefore support different perspectives on volunteering. Given this observation, Chapter 6 provides the most plausible explanations for why the functions that volunteer centres actually provide in different countries deviate from the template for a volunteering infrastructure.

Acknowledging this conclusion, Chapter 7 departs from the single template for a volunteering infrastructure in order to propose a template for each of the four perspectives on volunteering. For each perspective, it further elaborates the functions that a volunteering infrastructures should provide in order to support the perspective properly.

### **Character of the research**

This investigation of the establishment, development and functioning of local volunteering infrastructure in eight countries since the 1970s was motivated by the lack of academic literature on the subject of volunteering infrastructure. The study was conducted by a 'pracademic'<sup>115</sup> working within the volunteering infrastructure in the Netherlands. The investigation generated eleven points along which volunteer centres in the eight countries could be compared. In order to provide a scientific foundation for the investigation, researchers in the eight countries were invited to write articles addressing several questions with regard to the eleven points of comparison in their respective countries. They were also asked to provide feedback on the description of the development of volunteer centres in their respective countries. The points of comparison were subsequently discussed in a two-day invitational conference, which resulted in consensus on a definition of organisations that provide volunteering infrastructure ('volunteer centres'): *agencies that have a mission to support volunteers, volunteer-involving organisations and volunteering in general*. Participants in the conference further noted that volunteer centres are present everywhere and that they operate within various institutional settings. They achieved consensus regarding the six functions that characterise the local volunteering infrastructure (Table 11). The conclusions reached at the invitational conference were discussed and sharpened during several national and international meetings with

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<sup>115</sup> Wikipedia: 'A pracademic is someone who is both an academic and an active practitioner in a subject area' (accessed January 27, 2014)

researchers, officials involved in the development of volunteering policies and practitioners within the volunteering infrastructure.

Amongst the many points of comparison between the volunteering infrastructures in the eight countries, the four different perspectives on volunteering appeared to have influenced the development and functions of these infrastructures. In this dissertation, the four perspectives are elaborated and subsequently related to international comparative academic research on volunteering.

### **Complexity and limitations**

The research reported in this dissertation follows three lines: 1) the description of the development of local volunteer infrastructure in eight countries; 2) the distinction between the interests (in some cases, conflicting) that various parties have in volunteering, calling for alignment and explaining the need for volunteering infrastructure; 3) the discovery and elaboration of the impact of four perspectives on volunteering.

To the best of my knowledge, the topic of this investigation has received little academic attention to date. As identified in the literature review, only a modest number of academic articles had addressed this topic, and most of the existing articles had been written by a limited number of key researchers. A high percentage of the information identified included one-sided, anecdotal 'assignment' reports (e.g. annual reports) and single-function articles. The number of international forums within which to submit the findings of such research is limited. Due to language limitations, the literature search was restricted to resources published in English, German and Dutch.

### **Relevance**

The findings of this research are relevant for makers of volunteering policies, for people working within the volunteering infrastructure and for countries that aspire to establish a volunteering infrastructure. They could help these parties to determine the preconditions that are needed to provide adequate promotion and support for the dominant perspectives and to serve the interests of the parties involved properly. The model of volunteering infrastructure is needed, as some local volunteer centres consider their equipment insufficient to meet the expectations of their clients. The findings of this study suggest the following explanation for this perceived insufficiency. In addition to the dominant (and structurally supported) perspective within a given society, other perspectives on volunteering appear to be reflected and acknowledged, even without structural support (Table 26). In some cases, volunteering infrastructures that tend to respond to these reflections by proactively meeting the support expectations resulting from these reflections may not be aware that they actually lack the structural means to meet these additional expectations adequately.



## 10 b. SAMENVATTING

Vanaf de jaren zeventig vorige eeuw worden in verschillende landen initiatieven genomen om in algemene zin vrijwilligerswerk te promoten en te ondersteunen. Opvallend is de prominente rol van overheden in het nemen van maatregelen om burgers tot vrijwillige inzet te stimuleren. Tot dan was dat het exclusieve domein van maatschappelijke organisaties. Het zijn vooral overheden – soms in samenwerking met maatschappelijke organisaties – die het initiatief nemen om landelijke, regionale en lokale vrijwilligerscentrales op te richten. Die vrijwilligerscentrales vormen met elkaar een 'infrastructuur voor vrijwilligerswerk'. De ontwikkeling van de lokale infrastructuur vanaf de zeventiger jaren vorige eeuw, is het onderwerp van deze dissertatie. Dit onderzoek wil de volgende vragen beantwoorden:

- *Welke factoren leidden ertoe dat gelijktijdig en los van elkaar in zoveel verschillende landen - landen die in hun institutionele setting erg van elkaar verschillen - vrijwilligerscentrales worden opgericht?*
- *Hoe definieer je het fenomeen vrijwilligerscentrale?*
- *Welke functies vervullen vrijwilligerscentrales?*
- *Voeren vrijwilligerscentrales in de onderzochte landen dezelfde functies uit? Als dat niet zo is, hoe zijn die verschillen dan te verklaren?*
- *Hechten financiers belang aan een keurmerk om de prestaties van vrijwilligerscentrales te beoordelen?*

### **Belangrijkste conclusies**

Om het fenomeen 'vrijwilligerscentrale' te kunnen omschrijven, start het onderzoek met een verkenning van de ontstaansgronden, het ontwikkelingsproces en de activiteiten van lokale vrijwilligerscentrales in acht willekeurige landen (Denemarken, Duitsland, Engeland, Finland, Italië, Nederland, Noorwegen en de Verenigde Staten van Amerika). Het onderzoek stelt allereerst vast dat sinds de 70-er jaren in de vorige eeuw verschillende partijen (vrijwilligers, vrijwilligersorganisaties, overheden en 'derde partijen') belang blijken te hebben bij vrijwilligerswerk. Om die – verschillende en soms tegenstrijdige - belangen op elkaar af te stemmen, ontstaat er behoefte aan een onafhankelijke partij: een vrijwilligerscentrale

Het landenonderzoek levert voldoende materiaal op om het verschijnsel vrijwilligerscentrale te definiëren als: organisaties die de missie hebben om vrijwilligers en vrijwilligersorganisaties te ondersteunen en een klimaat te scheppen dat uitdaagt tot vrijwillige inzet. Vrijwilligerscentrales hebben met elkaar gemeen dat hun activiteiten terug te brengen zijn tot zes kernfuncties: bemiddelen, werven, ondersteunen van vrijwilligersorganisaties, ontwikkelen van nieuwe vormen van vrijwillige inzet, invoeren van vrijwilligersbeleid, realiseren van randvoorwaarden die uitnodigen tot vrijwillige inzet. Discussies in verschillende landen met medewerkers van vrijwilligerscentrales en wetenschappers die de infrastructuur van het vrijwilligerswerk onderzoeken, zorgen voor verdere aanscherping van en draagvlak voor deze definitie.

Ondanks het draagvlak voor deze definitie – die je als een blauwdruk voor een infrastructuur voor vrijwilligerswerk kunt beschouwen – toont het onderzoek verschillen aan tussen de manier waarop en de mate waarin vrijwilligerscentrales in de acht onderzochte landen deze zes functies vervullen. Nader onderzoek naar deze verschillen levert in eerste instantie vier verklaringen op, die vooral voort blijken te komen uit verschillen in de institutionele context tussen de onderzochte landen. Niet tevreden met alleen deze verklaringen, wordt een tweede onderzoekslijn uitgediept: welke motieven hebben overheden in de onderzochte landen om vrijwilligerswerk te promoten? Analyse van overheidsbeleid ten aanzien van vrijwilligerswerk in de onderzochte landen laat namelijk zien, dat overheden vier verschillende betekenissen aan vrijwilligerswerk toekennen. Betekenissen voor:

- welzijn, met het accent op de dienstverlenende rol van vrijwilligers;
- democratie, met het accent op de invloed die actief burgerschap, vrijwilligerswerk en het verenigingsleven hebben op het politieke gedrag van een samenleving;
- economie, met het accent op de impact van vrijwilligerswerk op de maatschappelijke en economische participatie van burgers;
- sociale cohesie, met het accent op de betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk voor de ontwikkeling van sociale netwerken, onderling vertrouwen, sociaal kapitaal en wederkerigheid.

Voor deze vier betekenissen van vrijwilligerswerk wordt een wetenschappelijke onderbouwing gezocht. Tijdens deze zoektocht valt het oog op de *Social Origin Theory* van Salamon en Anheier (1998). Salamon en Anheier onderscheiden in hun theorie liberale, sociaal democratische, corporatistische en etatistische non-profit regimes. Elk regime heeft een specifieke voorkeur voor één (of meer) van de vier betekenissen van vrijwilligerswerk. Liberale regimes benadrukken de dienstverlenende rol van vrijwilligers (welzijn), sociaal democratische regimes leggen het accent op actief burgerschap en sociale cohesie (democratie), corporatistische regimes hechten grote waarde aan de dienstverlenende rol van vrijwilligers, maar erkennen ook dat vrijwilligerswerk sociale cohesie versterkt en bijdraagt aan de maatschappelijke participatie van burgers. Etatistische regimes besteden geen specifieke aandacht aan het promoten van vrijwilligerswerk.

Dit inzicht leidt tot twee nieuwe – en voor dit onderzoek relevante – verklaringen voor verschillen in de infrastructuur van vrijwilligerswerk in de onderzochte landen. Allereerst kan met behulp van de Social Origin Theory vastgesteld worden dat de non-profit regimes in de acht onderzochte landen van elkaar verschillen en dat dientengevolge ook de voorkeuren van die regimes voor een bepaalde betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk verschillen.

Ten tweede blijken de functies die kenmerkend zijn voor de infrastructuur voor vrijwilligerswerk, niet alle zes in dezelfde mate en op dezelfde manier nodig te zijn, om elke betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk goed uit de verf te laten komen. Zo kan de bemiddelingsfunctie van vitaal belang zijn voor de ene betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk (bijvoorbeeld welzijn), terwijl die bemiddelingsfunctie voor een andere betekenis (b.v. sociale cohesie) van ondergeschikt belang is. Elke betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk kent een eigen rangorde toe aan de zes functies van de infrastructuur. Deze rangorde is in Tabel 34 tot uitdrukking gebracht

Tabel 34: Het belang van de zes functies voor de afzonderlijke betekenissen van vrijwilligerswerk

<b>Functie/Betekenis</b>	Welzijn	Democratie	Economie	Sociale Cohesie
Bemiddeling	<i>primair</i>	<i>tertiair</i>	<i>primair</i>	<i>tertiair</i>
Werving	<i>primair</i>	<i>secundair</i>	<i>secundair</i>	<i>secundair</i>
Organisatieondersteuning	<i>secundair</i>	<i>primair</i>	<i>secundair</i>	<i>primair</i>
Ontwikkeling van nieuwe vormen	<i>secundair</i>	<i>primair</i>	<i>primair</i>	<i>primair</i>
Implementatie van vrijwilligersbeleid	<i>tertiair</i>	<i>primair</i>	<i>tertiair</i>	<i>secundair</i>
Uitnodigende randvoorwaarden	<i>tertiair</i>	<i>tertiair</i>	<i>tertiair</i>	<i>tertiair</i>

Tabel 34 maakt zichtbaar, dat voor het realiseren van de afzonderlijke betekenissen van vrijwilligerswerk wisselende eisen aan de infrastructuur worden gesteld. Bij deze conclusie past de kanttekening, dat bovenstaande rangorde is gebaseerd op empirische kennis. Nader onderzoek is nodig om deze rangorde van een wetenschappelijke basis te voorzien.

Tabel 34 laat ook zien, dat de infrastructuur die de betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk voor welzijn en economie uit de verf moet laten komen, het accent op andere functies legt dan de infrastructuur die de betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk voor democratie en sociale cohesie moet versterken. Daarbij laat Tabel 34 ook zien dat er grote overeenkomsten zijn in de functies die ingezet moeten worden om enerzijds de betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk voor welzijn en economie en anderzijds die voor democratie en sociale cohesie te versterken.

Deze inzichten geven een overtuigende verklaring voor de gesignaleerde verschillen en leiden tot de conclusie dat de infrastructuur van het vrijwilligerswerk niet één blauwdruk voor een infrastructuur nodig heeft, maar vier: één voor elk van de vier betekenissen van vrijwilligerswerk.

Die vier blauwdrukken zijn op basis van Tabel 34 voor elke betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk uitgewerkt, met een specificatie van de diensten, faciliteiten en specifieke kennis die een infrastructuur moet kunnen leveren, om de dominante betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk adequaat te promoten en ondersteunen. Deze uitwerking laat zien dat een infrastructuur die toegerust is voor het versterken van de betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk voor welzijn, met bescheiden aanpassingen ook de betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk voor de economie kan versterken. Hetzelfde geldt voor het omgekeerde. Deze redenering gaat ook op voor de infrastructuren die de betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk voor democratie en sociale cohesie versterken. Duidelijk is echter wel, dat de infrastructuur die de betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk voor welzijn of economie versterkt, aanzienlijke aanpassingen behoeft om de betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk voor democratie of sociale cohesie te kunnen versterken. Hetzelfde geldt voor het omgekeerde.

## **Structuur van de dissertatie**

Dit onderzoek geeft inzicht in de ontwikkeling en de functies van de infrastructuur voor het vrijwilligerswerk. Het heeft de ambitie om de leemte in wetenschappelijke literatuur over dit onderwerp kleiner te maken. Een eerste literatuuronderzoek naar de infrastructuur van vrijwilligerswerk (hoofdstuk 2) leverde slechts 11 artikelen op met academische relevantie. Hoofdstuk 2 beschrijft de onderzoeksmethodiek. Hoofdstuk 3 gaat over ontwikkelingen die van invloed zijn op het ontstaan van vrijwilligerscentrales en stelt onder andere vast dat vier verschillende partijen (vrijwilligers, organisaties, overheden en zo-

genaamde 'derde partijen') ieder hun specifieke - en soms tegenstrijdige - belangen hebben in vrijwilligerswerk

In hoofdstuk 4 staat de infrastructuur van het vrijwilligerswerk centraal. Door voor acht landen het ontwikkelingsproces, de functies en toekomstperspectieven van vrijwilligerscentrales, en het overheidsbeleid ten aanzien van vrijwilligerswerk te beschrijven, kan het begrip 'infrastructuur voor vrijwilligerswerk' gedefinieerd en een blauwdruk voor een infrastructuur voor het vrijwilligerswerk geschetst worden.

Hoofdstuk 5 zet de functies die vrijwilligerscentrales in acht landen werkelijk uitvoeren af tegen de blauwdruk voor een infrastructuur. Voor de verschillen tussen ideaal en praktijk worden in eerste instantie vier verklaringen gevonden, die te herleiden zijn tot verschillen in de institutionele context in de onderzochte landen. Niet tevreden met alleen deze verklaringen, zet hoofdstuk 6 een nieuwe onderzoekslijn uit, die nader ingaat op vier verschillende betekenissen die overheidsbeleid toekent aan vrijwilligerswerk. Deze exercitie leidt tot twee nieuwe, en in het kader van dit onderzoek relevante verklaringen voor de verschillen tussen ideaal en werkelijkheid, met betrekking tot de functies die infrastructuren voor vrijwilligerswerk uitvoeren. Met behulp van de Social Origin Theory – die vier non-profit regimes onderscheidt - kan worden vastgesteld dat elk non-profit regime voorkeur heeft voor een bepaalde betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk. Omdat in de acht onderzochte landen verschillende non-profit regimes heersen, verschillen de voorkeuren van deze regimes voor een bepaalde betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk. Omdat de infrastructuur voor vrijwilligerswerk in de acht onderzochte landen verschillende betekenissen van vrijwilligerswerk moeten ondersteunen, zie je die verschillen ook terug in de functies die de infrastructuur in de onderscheiden landen vervult.

Op basis van dit inzicht neemt hoofdstuk 7 afscheid van één blauwdruk voor een infrastructuur en werkt voor elk van de vier betekenissen van vrijwilligerswerk in een afzonderlijke blauwdruk uit, welke functies de infrastructuur het beste in kan zetten om de dominante betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk adequaat te ondersteunen.

## **Karakter van het onderzoek**

De leemte in academische literatuur over infrastructuur voor vrijwilligerswerk, dwong de promovendus om voor deze studie de ontwikkeling en praktijk van de lokale infrastructuur als uitgangspunt te nemen. Als een *pracademic*<sup>116</sup>, werkzaam in de Nederlandse infrastructuur, heeft hij de ontwikkeling en functies van infrastructuur voor vrijwilligerswerk in een achttal landen beschreven. Deze verkenning leverde 11 thema's op, waarmee de infrastructuren voor vrijwilligerswerk in de acht landen met elkaar vergeleken konden worden. Om deze vergelijking een wetenschappelijke basis te geven, is in de acht onderzochte landen contact gezocht met wetenschappelijke onderzoekers op het terrein van infrastructuur voor vrijwilligerswerk. Deze onderzoekers zijn uitgenodigd om op basis van hun kennis van de infrastructuur in hun land, in een artikel, een aantal vragen met betrekking tot de 11 thema's te beantwoorden. Tevens is hen gevraagd om in dat artikel commentaar te geven op de beschrijving, die de promovendus over de ontwikkeling van vrijwilligerscentrales in hun land had gemaakt. Tijdens een tweedaagse conferentie hebben de onderzoekers deze artikelen met elkaar besproken en overeenstemming bereikt

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<sup>116</sup> Wikipedia: 'Een *pracademic* is iemand die zich zowel wetenschappelijk als uitvoerend met een bepaald onderwerp bezig houdt' (website bezocht op 27 januari 2014)



over een definitie van organisaties die infrastructuur voor vrijwilligerswerk bieden: *organisaties die de missie hebben om vrijwilligers, organisaties die met vrijwilligers werken en vrijwilligerswerk in algemene zin te ondersteunen*. De onderzoekers waren het ook met elkaar eens over zes functies, die kenmerkend zijn voor de lokale infrastructuur voor vrijwilligerswerk (Tabel 11). De conclusies van deze conferentie zijn tijdens een aantal nationale en internationale bijeenkomsten van onderzoekers, ontwikkelaars van vrijwilligerswerkbeleid en werkers in de infrastructuur voor het vrijwilligerswerk, getoetst en aangescherpt.

Bij de nadere bestudering van de 11 thema's waarop infrastructuren met elkaar vergeleken konden worden, ontdekte de promovendus dat de vier verschillende manieren waarop overheden naar vrijwilligerswerk keken, van invloed zijn op de ontwikkeling en activiteiten van de infrastructuur. Deze vier invalshoeken zijn nader uitgewerkt en verbonden met internationaal vergelijkend academisch onderzoek over vrijwilligerswerk.

## **Complexiteit en beperkingen**

Chronologisch loopt dit onderzoek langs drie lijnen: de eerst lijn volgt de ontwikkeling van lokale vrijwilligerscentrales in acht landen. De tweede lijn benoemt de verschillende partijen die belang hebben bij vrijwilligerswerk. Het feit dat het om vier verschillende partijen gaat die uiteenlopende en soms zelfs tegenstrijdige belangen bij vrijwilligerswerk hebben, verklaart waarom er op enig moment behoefte ontstaat aan een onafhankelijke infrastructuur voor vrijwilligerswerk die deze belangen met elkaar gaat verbinden. De derde lijn ontdekt vier verschillende manieren van kijken naar vrijwilligerswerk en beschrijft welke impact deze vier zienswijzen heeft op het functioneren van de infrastructuur van het vrijwilligerswerk.

Voor zover de promovendus bekend, heeft het onderwerp van deze dissertatie weinig aandacht van de academische wereld gekregen. Het aantal beschikbare academische artikelen over dit onderwerp was zeer bescheiden en afkomstig van een beperkt aantal sleutelfiguren. Een hoog percentage van de verzamelde informatie bestond uit empirische, eenzijdige werkdocumenten, zoals jaarverslagen, en uit artikelen die zich op een heel specifiek aspect richten. Het aantal internationale fora, waaraan de onderzoeksresultaten voorgelegd kunnen worden, was ook beperkt. Voor de onderzoeker waren alleen Engels-, Duits- en Nederlandstalige informatiebronnen toegankelijk.

## **Relevantie**

De resultaten van dit onderzoek zijn relevant voor ontwikkelaars van vrijwilligerswerkbeleid, voor mensen die werkzaam zijn in de infrastructuur voor vrijwilligerswerk en voor landen waar die infrastructuur nog ontwikkeld moet worden. Het onderzoek laat zien welke randvoorwaarden nodig zijn om de dominante betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk te versterken. De infrastructuur van het vrijwilligerswerk blijkt behoefte te hebben aan zo'n richtlijn, om te kunnen bepalen welke middelen zij in moet zetten om adequaat in te spelen op de verwachtingen van haar klanten. Een aantal vrijwilligerscentrales geeft aan die middelen ontoereikend te vinden.

Voor dit gevoel van ontoereikendheid vond het onderzoek de volgende verklaring. Naast de dominante – en structureel ondersteunde – betekenis van vrijwilligerswerk, blijken samenlevingen ook te reflecteren op andere betekenissen van vrijwilligerswerk, zonder deze structureel te ondersteunen (Tabel 26). Vrijwilligerscentrales die de neiging hebben

om op deze reflecties te reageren en pro-actief inspelen op verwachtingen die voortvloeien uit deze reflecties, zien soms over het hoofd dat zij feitelijk niet over de middelen beschikken om deze nieuwe verwachtingen op adequate wijze te honoreren.





In 1973, Cees van den Bos (1951) graduated from The Hague University of Applied Sciences with a degree in Community Development. From 1974 to 1977, he coordinated a youth centre in Alkmaar, the Netherlands. Since 1977, he has headed the first Dutch local volunteer centre, which is located in Arnhem ([www.vrijwilligeinzetarnhem.nl](http://www.vrijwilligeinzetarnhem.nl)). He has also served on various boards and fulfilled a variety of functions within the Dutch national volunteering infrastructure, including extensive activities with the National Association of Volunteer Centres (*Landelijke Vereniging van Vrijwilligerscentrales*) and the Association of Dutch Voluntary Effort Organizations (*Nederlandse Organisaties Vrijwilligerswerk* or NOV). In 2004, he began doctoral studies within the Chair for Volunteering, Civil Society and Business at RSM Erasmus University. The topic of his doctoral research was volunteering infrastructure, particularly with regard to the motives that governments and other parties have for establishing local volunteer centres in America, Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Italy, Norway and the Netherlands, in addition to defining their tasks, functions and performance. He has published several articles on this topic in the Dutch volunteering research journal *Vrijwillige Inzet Onderzocht* (ViO), and he has provided lectures at home and abroad.