

Guidelines to Volunteering at Outdoor Sport Events



ENI PROJECT

Guidelines to Volunteering

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Encourage Involve Engage – Young Volunteers for Outdoor Sport Events, Outdoor
Sport Events for Young Volunteers

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Introduction

This guideline is the summary of all the experiences gained in the ENI project in terms of voluntary involvement in sport events. It contains general information about how to organize events with volunteers as well as specific case studies on volunteer involvement of prominent sport event organizers from 4 countries in Europe.

The important role of sport in European society as well as the societal function of sport-related voluntary activities have been widely recognized in Europe and their main benefits as well as their challenges have been laid down in influential policy papers like the White Paper on Sport. As this document states: “sport and volunteering in sport provide attractive possibilities for young people’s engagement and involvement in society” and could also offer many occasions for non-formal education and community engagement. However, especially among young people there is a growing tendency to practice sport on different grounds than before; not collectively but rather individually, and in an organized structure, which is resulting in a declining volunteer base for most sport clubs. According to the Eurobarometer survey issued in 2014, in total, 7% of EU citizens engage in volunteering to support sporting activities, which figure has not changed since the previous survey in 2009.

It is, however, inevitable that sports clubs highly rely on the assistance by volunteers. The existence of some of them would be unimaginable without volunteers’ support. This is especially true for the organization of sport events where attendance of volunteers is very high.



ENI project and volunteer involvement

Present guidelines were composed in the framework of the *“Encourage, Involve, Engage: young volunteers for outdoor sport events & outdoor sport events for young volunteers”* (ENI) project. With the composition of the project we wanted to distinguish between event related and not-event related sport volunteering activities and thus we focused on volunteer participation in and around sport events. We have chosen to highlight outdoor sport events with special focus on mountain bike as we think these fields have their own particularities. MTB races are extremely exciting for young generations and there are many young athletes but also audience and volunteers.

Sport and its surroundings can be attention calling and thus can serve as a popular model for recruitment. Through our activities in this field we might more successfully fulfil our mission to change mentality for volunteer actions and find solutions to its challenges than with many other sports. Moreover, outdoor sports are more typical to rural than to urban environments. They might be the only or one of the scarce sport opportunities available for locals. They need devotion to Nature and they create a community feeling by having to face harder and longer-term challenges (like building a track in the forest, staying in fields in assistance of refreshment points regardless of weather conditions etc).

The present guidelines cumulates the experiences and knowledge gained in the project by highlighting the special features volunteering in outdoor sport events have, the challenges raised by them and we offering exchange of good practices between the involved sport organizations in a learning-by doing way. The focus of the one-year project was the 6 meetings. The first and last meetings also hosted a networking event with an opening workshop and a closing conference. Within the project partners visited each other's' races with young volunteers and observed how the event was organized and exchanged experiences.



Our target group was volunteers at (and around) these sport events with special focus on young volunteers (aged 16-25) as we believe their involvement is the key to the future of sport volunteering.

With our belief in pragmatic solutions we arranged the project to be able to make real the mobility of volunteers and to form the project and its results based on these visits.



Volunteer situations in Austria, Hungary, Czechia, Slovakia

Austria



The share of volunteering in Austria is very high and contributes an important part of the social structures. An overwhelming proportion of people in Austria are willing to engage in volunteering and to contribute in a wide range of areas. Without this willingness to perform these activities gratuitously, a large number of cuts would be noticeable. In Austria, for example, the rescue service and the fire brigade are largely organized on a voluntary basis and would not be able to be organized in their usual form without it.

From the point of view of sports events, volunteers are an indispensable part of organizing events, regardless of their size. As an example of major events can here the Ski World Cup 2013 in Schladming (1100 volunteers), the road wheel 2018 in Innsbruck (800 volunteers) or the Salzkammergut Trophy in Bad Goisern (1000 volunteers). But smaller events away from the great media interest could not be implemented without the willingness of volunteer hours either.

With the platform www.freiwilligenweb.at, a network was created in Austria to enable both volunteers and organizations to obtain information and exchange information quickly and easily.

The analysis of statistical data on volunteers in Austria also shows that there is potential to look at the numbers of non-volunteering people. For organizations, it may well be an opportunity to develop communication in this sector and specifically target non-volunteering people to address them and generate greater awareness. An important component will be the own presentation of the organization or event, in order to make clear the variety of the fields of application.



Czechia



Volunteers in sports belong to the most numerous groups. The voluntary work can be done at two levels: the professional level (trainers, instructors) or the level which does not require any qualification (organizer, maintenance, transport etc.)

A volunteer in sports has usually a different motivation than a volunteer in other areas. They can possibly be motivated just because they want to support the sports club which they were members of before; or for getting a material reward. (e.g. a t-shirt from a marathon run); spending free time; integration, self-realization, philosophy – the importance of the event. Some athletes become volunteers after a serious injury.

The organizer of a sports event has the leading role in recruiting volunteers for sports activities.



Hungary



Volunteering in Hungary is getting more and more focus both from the side of the civil society as well as from the government. The Act LXXXVIII/2005 provides the general background for all registered volunteering activities in Hungary and regulates conditions such as time limits according to age, reimbursement, contracts etc.

In Hungary there are special rules for the age group under 18 for volunteering: there is a special regulation of year 2012 about the compulsory school community volunteer work, which raises the number of volunteered work (and hopefully the popularity of volunteering) among youngsters aged 14-18. Volunteering in sport is gaining more highlight among youngsters and they serve as the main target group of this sector in the future. It is especially noticeable that sport event volunteering is very popular within all volunteer activities and attracts many youngsters, too.



As for the sectors, water sports have the most volunteers, which might be thanks to sport policy of the government having special focus on this sport and the recent organisation of the European water games in 2018. However, outdoor sports, including our highlight- MTB- has very little number of volunteers according to statistics.

It is therefore important to draw attention to the importance of volunteering in this sector and provide a toolkit of know -hows and good practices for outdoor sport event organizers, who would like to attract more volunteers.



Slovakia



According to “Volunteering in Slovakia – the Research Reflections“ implemented in 2011 as the part of the national campaign for the European Year of Volunteering 2011, with the support of the European Union, people are more involved in informal volunteering than in formal, men and women equally. The age group of 15 – 19-year-olds is the smallest, the largest is 50 – 59-year-old in informal and 70 and more year-old in formal volunteering, a significant age difference is in informal volunteering. The higher education people have, the higher their goodwill in volunteering is. People with university education are much more involved than people with elementary education. In formal volunteering it is not critical whether a person lives in a city or rural area, but in informal more respondents were living in rural areas than those living in the city. In the context of sectors, administration, social area, sports and culture are more engaged than archaeological or medical area.

On 1.1.2016 entered into force the Law on Sport, joined to the Law on Volunteering. A part of the Volunteering Contract has used possibility of financial reimbursement for the loss of time of a "volunteer" performing volunteering activity in sports, a possibility of reward for spent time, for example, on a business trip.

The Volunteering Act regulates compensation for the loss of time of a volunteer registered in the sports information system for each hour of volunteering in sports at a minimum hourly wage for 2016 of EUR 2.328 per hour; for 2017 the rate of EUR 2.50 applies for each hour and for 2018 EUR 2.759 for each hour. For the year 2019, the rate is 2.989 euros per hour.

More than 10% (10.8%) of volunteers are active in the field of sports. Men are significantly more involved in sports organizations than women. We see the value of volunteering for both society and individuals, contributing to changes in thinking, stereotyping and myths about volunteering and volunteers. One of the main goals is to make this area attractive for this and future generations.



Volunteering in the sports clubs

SALZKAMMERGUT TROPHY (AT)

With the Salzkammergut Trophy our mountain bike club organizes the biggest mountain bike marathon in Austria. With more than 5,000 participants per year, the event is also in the forefront in Europe. 

In order to simplify the handling of more than 1,000 volunteers and to better structure them, we have also installed group leaders, so-called "guides", who exercise a leading role among the volunteer helpers. They are involved in the organization throughout the year and share key information with their groups. These guides also help in the recruitment of new volunteers to have enough staff available in their areas.

The guest volunteers from the partner races can be part in different areas. A field of application would be the help desk within the starting number issue, which serves as a central point of contact for questions for national and international participants. Since we also have many participants from the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia at our race, it would be helpful to get help from the helpdesk in these foreign languages.

ŠELA (CZ)

Ensuring of a sufficient number of volunteers is both time and organizational the most demanding activity of the plant. The financial possibilities of our club are not as good to pay the competent staff who would take care of the organization of the competitions. Functions are cumulative, so volunteers are only asked to help with the organization of events and do not take part in the normal activities of the sport club. An exception is the "hard core" of volunteers who take care of the track during the whole year. Closed community likes to spend their free time together in nature and is involved in maintaining and building "their" tracks. 

In general, it is problematic to reach out to individuals asking for help. New volunteers are primarily got from personal ties and building new relationships, which is time consuming. We do not want to actively seek new volunteers, but we try to keep existing volunteers in the organizing team.

CROSSKOVÁCSI (HU)

Crosskovacsi Association organizes 3 major races annually. Our biggest event, however, is the Crosskovacsi Marathon organized each year in June. The event is not a mere competition of athletes, but also a social hub and a regional attraction with strong social cohesion powers. Besides the MTB race, we also organize a trail run event, which takes place on the day following the MTB race in June. The preparations for these races are all-year-round activities and require a tremendous amount of voluntary work.

The majority of the volunteers do not work all year for Crosskovácsi, but their volunteer activities are concentrated around racing events. Their activities include preparing the tracks, refreshing point, parking, finish build/tear down, registration, taking care of the children while their parents are competing, transferring people and stuff, health and safety points, shops, storage, catering.

We operate as a hub. People volunteering in previous years bring in their friends and acquaintances. We try to involve young people and first give them small tasks. It's not difficult, because it has a tradition here in our club. We operate a bike school and kids start volunteering from it as well as they grow older. Also, their parents get involved. The challenge is not really in recruiting but rather further motivating and retaining good volunteers.



Crosskovácsi as association, race and hub deeply roots in its local and regional basis and contacts. It operates as a hub for local inhabitants and attracts generations to its volunteer activities. It has very good cooperation with local authorities including the Municipality, the local school and kindergarden as well as civil organizations and local and regional businesses. Crosskovacsi highly relies on the work of its volunteers. We have about 100 volunteers, who help to ensure the smooth running of its events. The majority of these volunteers work closely around the event assisting in the direct preparation, the operation and the closing down of these. A smaller number of the volunteers however, work more continuously on an all year around basis. As it functions well, it attracts plenty of local helpers therefore there has been no need for outsider volunteers, especially not from abroad. With the advancement of the race, however, there is an increasing number of foreign racers as well as interested people of foreign origins in the audience. Therefore, in the future there might be a need to attract foreign volunteers, too.

HORAL (SK)

Sport club HORAL was established in 1999. Its mission is to promote sport and healthy lifestyle and contribute to local tourism and local and regional community building with its activities. Our top activity is organizing HORAL MTB MARATHON in Low Tatras. Since its start in 2000 it has developed to be one of the most influential MTB races and a very important outdoor activity not only in the region, but throughout Slovakia. One of its charms is that its tracks lead in three national parks (High Tatras, Low Tatras and Slovak Paradise). In 2017 the HORAL was the official UEC European Championship. The number of participants in 2017 was more than 1600.

In order to manage all these tasks, we have to find more than 250 volunteers. Most of them we find in our region. It means town Svit, villages: Batizovce, Šuňava, Liptovská Teplička, Vikartovce, Telgárt, Šumiac, ...

Mostly we are looking for volunteers in the circle of friends, friends of friends, acquaintances, club members, other sports clubs and schools. During 20 years of organizing the event, the volunteer base has been built, stabilized and has a positive and personal relationship to the event. They take it as their own. We see the problem mainly in the fact that we have quite a few young volunteers and their relationship with the event is not as personal as that of the elderly. Here we have the biggest reserves and we have to improve this situation!

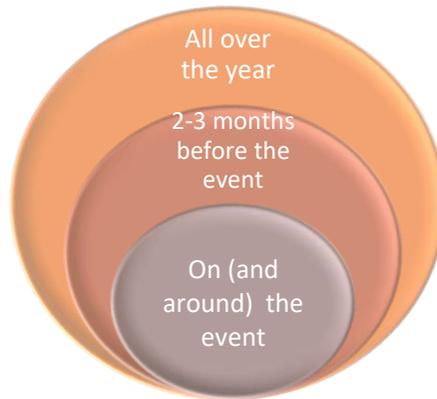
We think that the organization of the event over 20 years of its existence has become well thought out and sophisticated. We have good relations with authorities, forest owners and landowners.

Even in the field of volunteers we really need, the situation is good and stabilized.

But what we need to improve is to increase number of young volunteers and to stabilize them in the organizational structure.



Volunteer challenges: phases



We can categorize types of volunteer involvement in various ways. With outdoor sports there are some people working all year round then there is an intensive period 2-3 months prior to the event and a very very intensive time around and at the event.

All over the year

In case of a bigger event there needs to be a long preparation time to ensure visibility, and smooth organization of the event. Certainly, as we get closer to the event, the activities required grow in number and intensity, but actions in time preserve a lot of work.

These preparational activities include:

Entry, Website, PR, Finance, Bookkeeping, Administration, Permissions, Sponsors, Marketing, etc.

If the event is smaller, it might be enough if one person (normally the President of the club) takes most of the decision-making and the actions. As the event grows bigger more and more help is needed.

Normally besides the chief team, who is the leader and occasionally 2-8 paid staff, volunteers here are not numerous. As most of these works require all over attention and care and sometimes specialized knowledge, young volunteers are quite rare here. So, in this respect these volunteer activities are not in focus for our guidelines.

2-3 months before the event

In the period between about 3 months prior to the event until the event itself, the intensity of preparation for the race is getting higher and higher. Those activities which were mentioned in the previous heading (all over the year activities) get busier, but also new tasks emerge. This requires new volunteers to enter the procedure.

As here there are outdoor events in focus, the main tasks which need new volunteer energy include:

- ❖ Track maintenance
- ❖ Track development
- ❖ Track clearance
- ❖ Signs preparations
- ❖ etc.

In case of an average size event (around 500-1000 participants) the number of volunteers required at this stage is around 20-30.

With mountain bike marathons 2-3 months before the race a general maintenance of the track is needed. Youngsters gather and with the help of leaders (those who have previous experience on the activity), they engage in cleaning of various path parts, fixing the route and track elements (e.g. bridges), ... (what else?)

At (and around) the event

The majority of the volunteers do not work all year for an event, but their volunteer activities are concentrated around the actual race. Their activities can include the following:

- ❖ Registration,
- ❖ Security
- ❖ Food station,
- ❖ Start/finish area building, etc.
- ❖ preparing the tracks,
- ❖ refreshing point,
- ❖ parking,
- ❖ finish build/tear down,
- ❖ taking care of the children
- ❖ transferring people and stuff,
- ❖ health and safety points,
- ❖ shops,
- ❖ storage,
- ❖ catering.
- ❖ etc

As most of the to-dos require physical work, not surprisingly the majority of these volunteers are young male. The main age group is that of 15-25 with the more aged ones in roles of leaders. Of course, there are volunteers in leading positions who are older. In many races the “senior” volunteers, those who are in chief positions and have an overall knowledge on the race are as old as the race- were there at its starting steps. They normally are in the intention to pass on their experiences and knowledge to younger generation.



Aspects on volunteer work to consider

Voluntary work is not work for free

Although voluntary work is working for no payment, this does not mean that a volunteer is not compensated for the energy and time he devotes to the event. Various organizations have various means to “thank” the volunteers for their work. The most important thing is to be grateful and to express how much we appreciate the given skills and help of the volunteer. This is a very important factor as the greatest motivation of volunteers is mostly to feel useful and valued. Main organizers and other leaders, however distracted and tired they could be should devote energy to this aspect. Another important immaterial factor is to make new volunteers integrate to the team. There is no better feeling than to experience the “united we can” effect. Without these two aspects we cannot expect to retain our volunteers.

Other “compensational” material factors:

Food and drink: at the event when a very focused and probably long-time activity is required, we cannot really rely on the self-catering of volunteers. It is common rule that if the volunteer is tired, cold or has other physical concerns, his work and concentration will not be maximized. Therefore, at most events volunteers get food and drink- mostly in the form of vouchers.



T-shirts: Many organizers print t-shirts or other pieces of clothes for their race. These are not merely outfits, but also important merchandize products with careful design behind. They carry the logos and symbols of the event of the organizing body. For volunteers these can be useful types of uniforms which represent the togetherness and the belonging of the event. The costs of these T-shirts, however, is not to be minimized.



For an event supported by hundreds of volunteers this could be a considerable sum of money which should be calculated in the total budget of the race.

Raffle and party: After bigger events the organizers often make an after-party. The after party can have with the purpose of giving a closure of the event, thanking both participants and organizers including volunteers for taking part. In a lot of cases, a raffle is joined to the after-party, where valuable prizes- mainly offered by the sponsors of the event- are offered.



Training of volunteers

It is essential to have volunteers who have stable knowledge on the process and who we can rely on in subtasks. To this end, training of volunteers is required in one way or another. Mostly this is not organized around a firm strategy, but done only by experience, usually in a non-organized form. That is for sure, that the most useful way of acquiring knowledge and skills in the given field is “learning by doing”. That means that even without systemized instructions, newcomers can learn what to do by observing others and copying their actions. Mostly, this is a more fun way to learn and in a lot of cases the most effective one. However, when the event gets bigger and more complicated, there are more volunteers and more subdivisions, it could be very useful to have a more strategic way to train volunteers. This includes certain methodologies and tools:

Orientation talks: before the event gatherings to share important information is essential. They could be about separate field like entry or a sumup orientation about the main factors.



Written instructions: can range from overall descriptions on the organization of the event to specific data. Overall description includes things like key figures of the organizers, key telephone numbers, main facts about the race. Even if a volunteer is not mingled to a number of these areas of the race, they are good to have a general overview of the race. Even if no such specific description is prepared, it could be very useful material what is written about the race for the participants. Usually they are informed about the start area, the registration, special requirements, the track, certain key dates and times, etc. Specific information could be prepared for those who have a role in a specific field (e.g. in the registration)

Visual aids: Graphics, pictures, illustrations often transfer information more quickly and effectively than words. An infographic chart can be much more understandable than sentences about the same issue.

Organized training: Although normally this is not included in the programme of the organizers, trainings organized for the purpose of teaching volunteers about various aspects of the event can be very useful. It could give an overall view on the race and can get a step-by-step description on the most important “to-dos” to achieve a successful event. It is nice if this has parts which are game-based methodologies, include a lot of visual aids, simulations, practical issues. Crosskovacsi has its “Ready for race- a guideline for organizers” programme and material which give an insight to aspects of organizing an event in a yearly basis, from things like getting permissions to budget and necessary human resources, all enriched by games and visual aids. This one day – mainly theoretical- programme is accompanied with an on-the- field practical training, where youngsters can get to know how to signpost the tracks for the race.



Case studies

Case study1: All-Year-Long Volunteers- work distribution

Background: The number of all-year-volunteers for Crosskovacsi is cca 4-5 with an increase each year. These volunteers are responsible for building up the marketing and operational strategy, ensuring administrative background, providing PR and marketing activities, running registration and entry, updating the webpage and operating social media. The majority of these volunteers are women, their typical age is between 40-55.

The challenge: Increasing workload is inevitable as the race is getting bigger- home, work and volunteer activity harmonization gets more and more difficult for volunteers. Distribution of work- harmonizing the work with that of other volunteers gets higher emphasis

The solution: When the race does not attract many racers and it does not go international it is sufficient to have a leader, who makes decision about all issues –small and big- and who has some helpers in various cases. It also works on an ad hoc basis, whenever a problem occurs the solution and volunteers to help are improvised. With growing numbers of attendees and tasks however, a more decentralised pattern is required where key actors- subleaders are appointed to do subtasks and make decisions about their expertised fields. It requires a clear model of task distribution and of responsibilities as well as ways of communication and information share. Crosskovacsi has developed a system where there are volunteers with great expertise to take over certain subtasks. There is a leading person for the entry issues, one for PR, one for the Running event and one for projects, etc.

Case study2: Volunteers for the event-train and retain

Background: The majority of the volunteers do not work all year for Crosskovácsi, but their volunteer activities are concentrated around racing events. Their activities include preparing the tracks, refreshing point, parking, finish build/tear down, registration, taking care of the children while their parents are competing, transferring people and stuff, health and safety points, shops, storage, catering. As most of the to-dos require physical work, not surprisingly most of these volunteers are young male. The main age group is that of 15-25 with the more aged ones in roles of leaders. Of course, there are volunteers in leading positions who are older, they kind of grew up with the race from

its beginnings over 20 years ago. They are between 45 and 55 mostly and are in the intention to pass on their experiences and knowledge to younger generation.

The challenge: there are two main challenges with young volunteers. 1, One is to train them to a point where they don't need any more orientation, but they can act independently preferably also in cases of special, unexpected cases. 2, The other one is their retainment. Once they "got hooked" and they collected the knowledge and skills to help it would be nice to keep them on the long run. This is not easy as at the age when normally they enter our race, they are 16 with a lot of free time and no career and family orientation. With entering higher education or the world of work their busier schedule might prevent them to devote the previous amount of time on volunteering.

The solution:

1. Training: the normal training process for new volunteers is "learning-by-doing". Youngsters are put to work with the leadership of a more experienced person and throughout these experiences they learn the gist of their job. To get them help and to make them see the race in its more complexity (not only the tasks of their own positions) Crosskovacsi has developed a training material collecting all necessary information about the organization of outdoor races. From time to time we hold trainings and have orientation days for our new volunteers

2. Retaining volunteers. The main motivational factors to stay as volunteers for an association is "feeling good", "feeling useful". We try to establish the basis of good atmosphere by operating as a hub, where extra activities like excursions, parties, pubbing are also included. Our international projects contribute to enhancing team building and giving an opportunity for joint activities, too. We always honour the help- not with money, but with moral valuing and with providing contra help if needed.

Case Study 3: Recruiting more than 1000 Volunteers for the Event

Background: Successfully implementing a major event such as the Salzkammergut Trophy and keeping the quality standard at a high level requires the support of a large number of volunteer helpers. In a place like Bad Goisern, with 7,000 inhabitants, it is not natural to set up this large number and win for the race weekend. Due to the steady growth of the event, the extensive tasks and the countless service offers for participants, the demand has steadily increased over the years.

The challenge: Large number of participants, long distance with over 210 kilometres, extensive offer for the participants around their experience "Salzkammergut Trophy" and the understanding to work "for free" for an event represent the challenge.

The solution: Due to the continuous development of the event and the increasing need for volunteers, the organizers decided a few years ago to create a concept that gives volunteers a uniform remuneration.

The basic attitude and enthusiasm for the event and the willingness to get involved regionally is the first prerequisite.

In addition, each helper gets a daily rate of 30 €, which he gets for his activity per day of use. Furthermore, each helper catering provided by the organizers. On the one hand about food and drink vouchers, on the other hand over packed lunches, when the volunteers are out of the village in use.

The targeted response of regional associations has created a strong bond between the Salzkammergut Trophy and the region, which is ultimately an important part of the cooperation.

Case Study 4: Coordination of the volunteers of the track signing unit

Background: The route network of the Salzkammergut Trophy is very complex due to the seven different distances and the long distances of up to 210 kilometres. In total, more than 570 kilometres of track must be signposted. The coordination of the volunteers presents challenges to those responsible, as there is a great deal of responsibility in attaching the signs. Four weeks before the event, the track work begins.

The challenge: The coordination of about 20 people for the signage of 570 kilometres of racing and the creation of accurate plans with the registered marks to work efficiently.

The solution: We work with a sophisticated plan system, where all waypoints, signs and arrows are entered in great detail. In order to be able to handle the extensive area better, we have created individual sections, which in turn is managed by one volunteer each. With our computer-supported system, the Digital Room Information System of the Province of Upper Austria, we prepare detailed plans months before the event, which are then handed out to the helpers. On these plans, the area managers will find all information, at which point, which sign, or additional sign must be attached. The organization and installation of this system has required a lot of experience and gathered know-how, which has been collected over the years and constantly incorporated into the improvement.

In this way, we can guarantee enough time in the four weeks before the event to sign up for the immense route network with volunteers.

When young helpers join the team, they are assigned to an area in the first year together with an experienced guide. This allows them to familiarize themselves with the system and then take over their own area in subsequent years.

This way, the information is passed on and the helpers are aware of the importance of their work, as a faulty route signage for the event can have serious consequences.

Since many of the signers are enthusiastic mountain bikers themselves, the helpers control themselves by being able to drive off and control many passages in their free time in the weeks leading up to the race.

Case study 5: Rejuvenating volunteer team

Background: The sports club HORAL - ALTO Slovakia has been organizing the HORAL MTB MARATHON since 2000. It has been twenty years and the organizational team has not changed much during this time. The race director and the narrow organization team are still the same people. So, it is logical that they are no longer the youngest.

The challenge: By joining the ENI project, we were forced to start looking for more young people, arranging their organizational team and working with them more. At the same time, as part of the ENI project, we were made to work together with young volunteers as we started to travel to foreign partner events more than before.

The solution: We consider these two moments: more intensive youth work and travelling to experience as the most important aspects of the ENI project.

The conclusions for us are simple:

- Continue to work with young people, looking for them in local schools, clubs and associations. Giving them more opportunities to engage in “Horal” and giving them more responsibility. These steps will certainly lead to a rejuvenation of the Horal organizational team and to the ability to organize these demanding events in the future.
- Travel regularly to the best MTB events in the surrounding countries. By personally familiarizing yourself with the ways in which the best organizational teams face challenges and problems, you will enrich enormously. And when a group of young volunteers always comes with us, it is not only a great experience for them, but also a form of reward.

Case study 6: Ensuring safe conditions

Background: Aspects like mountain biking, alpine environment, long trails with high elevation, erratic weather, many racers all make event HORAL an action with high safety demands.

The challenge: We do not know how to influence the driving technique, skill, training and risk level of individual competitors. However, we must ensure that the track is as

safe as possible, that we cover it best with the organizers and that we act efficiently and with the health of the competitor in the event of an adverse event.

The solution: Looking back at the first years of the Horal event today, we can see that our security measures at that time were very low. However, we gradually improved until we came to the fact that safety issues are described in the “Safety Plan” manual. This document details the organizational structure of the security team. Communication between team members and also describes activity in the event of danger or adverse event.

The entire race track is described in detail in the document. It also includes photo documentation of track points where the marshals are present and patrols of the rescue team. The timetable for the passage of the competitors is also recorded in this document. This document is constantly being improved, because security is one of the most important priorities of the event organization.

Case study 7: Engage /involve more young people into the event

Background: Sport club ŠELA SPORT organizes AUTHOR ŠELA MARATHON since 2000, the founder and director of the race was 29 years old when it started. The smallest organizing team at that time consisted of people 10 - 20 years older, the first generation of the organizing team was changed around 2010. We have been organizing the race for 20 years and it is clear that it is necessary to gradually supplement the organizing team with younger organizers.

Challenge: How to ensure enough volunteers who devote their time and ideas to our race? How to motivate and reward them? How to attract young volunteers?

The solution: Our race does not try to increase the number of participants at any cost (less effort, promotion focused on the mainstream), so it is attractive for some people to be part of the organizing team. The basic approach is enthusiasm for action and a willingness to participate in the organization of the race, simply “to be there...”

We try to improve conditions for organizers every year. Some time ago we decided to give the organizers a small financial reward, ancillary catering (meal vouchers for food and drinks at the end of the event) and participation in the final raffle of the organizers (a total of 150 prizes out of 6,000 Euro). In the future, we plan to increase the daily meal allowance and create a tent for the event, „VIP corner“ for meeting of organizers after the event connected with refreshment and entertainment.

Rather, we attract new young volunteers within the community of existing organizers and are often teenage parents of the organizers. Among the new organizers, there are always very capable organizers who are more interested in the race and take on more responsibility from the management of each section and become new leaders. (route marking, refreshment station, start area, destination, etc.)

A great benefit was the involvement of young volunteers in the ENI Project to see how partner club sports events are organized.

Case study 8: Coordination of technical preparation of the route and organizing of the route during the race

Background: Mountain bike races take place in the countryside, often in less accessible locations. Changing natural conditions (forest condition, natural calamities, logging), unpredictable weather, a large number of competitors place great demands on the organizers when securing the route.

The challenge: How to ensure the safety of competitors, attractive track and organizers?

The solution: The preparation of the race routes is divided into two areas:

1. Maintenance and preparation of routes, marking and cleaning

Maintenance of the plant route is almost all year job, it concerns pruning fallen trees, mowing vegetation, repair or construction of wooden footbridges, restoration of permanent marking on trees. Marking the route just before the race and cleaning after the event is provided by 12 organizers, who have the route divided into 6 sections. These people have the same "handwriting" marking, we use cardboard direction signs and PVC reflective bands.

2. Organizing assistance during the race

The race route is organized by 110 track commissars, who ensure safe passage of competitors and serve as information service for riders and race management. Each important point on the track is marked with a unique location number, which has clearly defined times for competitors to pass and localize for medical assistance.

The individual sections of the route have their area managers, who are trained at each route station and are responsible for explaining the race properly. It is a very stressful and responsible job, because an individual's mistake can affect the course of the race. To avoid mistakes and mistakes, 15 minutes before the riders pass, the so-called "Supervisor" rides on the motorcycle, which checks the occupation of the stands and the status of the marking. (unfortunately, there are still people who want to harm and destroy the work of others)

All of these activities require long-term preparation; the transmission of all information requires a responsible approach by the event organizer and volunteers.

Annex 1: Observation conclusions

Introduction

In the framework of ENI project the main focus was on how to involve young volunteers into the activities of a foreign race, how to make them observe and learn new things which might be taken home to their own event and how to generate conclusions which could be useful for other racers who would like to involve new foreign volunteers into their race. To make the most of these visits there were preparations and involvement on 3 levels:

- 1, on the level of **organizers** for whom it was a challenge to get prepared of the visits
- 2, on the level of **team leaders**, who had to select and prepare their young candidates for the trip and for the observation and helping challenges
- 3, for **young volunteers**, who were asked to observe the new race and to assist in various tasks.

The documentation of the above also happened in various ways:

Organizers collected their comments in the case studies and in the present part of the guidelines, team leaders summed up and commented on young volunteers documentations, and youngsters prepared a **picture report**, a **video report** and an **observation report** on each visit.

Of these observation reports there were altogether 8 on SELA, 10 on CRK, 7 on SKGT, 8 on Horal (altogether **33 observation reports**) with the sumup of experiences of each club at each event (altogether **12 observation sumup reports**) and an overall report on the observations. Besides there was also a section where young participants were asked about the main difficulties they were facing as volunteers at foreign races and which was discussed orally.

The present annex is the sumup report of these above resources. It includes the **challenges, the solutions, the recommendations and the conclusions of the visits of young volunteers and team leaders.**

The events

Within the ENI project there were altogether 6 meetings. Four of them fell into the time when the sports clubs biggest annual sport race took place. Leaders, youth leaders and volunteers from other sport clubs (i.e. project partners) visited these events, took part in their activities and prepared reports.

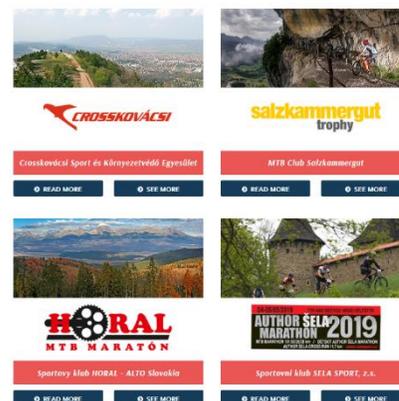
The events were the following.

1st race – AUTHOR ŠELA MARATHON
(Czech Republic) – May 2019

2nd race – CROSSKOVÁCSI MARATHON
(Hungary) – June 2019

3rd race – SALZKAMMERGUT TROPHY
(Austria) - July 2019

4th race – HORAL MARATHON (Slovakia) -
August 2019



for more information on the races please visit <https://www.mtb4eu.net/en/partners>

Preparation for the hosting of foreign volunteers and for giving them purposeful occupation at the races.

As the organizations mainly attract racers from their countries (except Austria) and employ homeland volunteers (Austria included), it was a challenge to prepare for the foreign young volunteers.

The occupations given by each host were a combination of observation and help. In some cases it was easier to arrange the observation part when volunteers were taken to various points of the race and could see how home volunteers are led, arranged and do their jobs. In other cases there were efforts to engage foreign volunteers. This was perhaps more demanding for organizers as there were many aspects to consider.

It is extremely important to plan volunteer engagement activities. The basis for the creation of a timetable to make an effective foreign volunteer and everyone had plenty of time to get acquainted with the scope and organizational workplace. The program should be varied so that volunteers managed to explore the maximum organizational sections and engaged in the work. It is always good to remember the various delays and complications, in this case it is advisable to prepare a "plan B", which omits less important places to observe. The basis of successful cooperation is punctuality and adherence to timetables.

Example for the conclusions of a more observation-based timetable (SELA)

In order to be a good host, ŠELA have set aside two organizers from the team, who have been dedicated only to foreign guests throughout the event. About a month before the event, they organized a one-day training and visited all the places on the track and in the background of the race that were decided to show to the guests. Engaging volunteers is a very stressful job because an individual's mistake can spoil the safety of the participants or damage the sports aspect of the race. For this reason, ŠELA have always visited the organizational places and conducted training of foreign volunteers directly at the event, always making sure they understand everything and whether they dare to do all the activities.

Example for the conclusions of a more assistance-based timetable (CRK)

In order to arrange a more activity-based occupation for foreign visitors, Crosskovacsi started to plan their involvement more than a month ago. The main organizer responsible for the hosting faced several challenges. As Crosskovacsi race have been organized for the 24th time in 2019, there was a lot of experienced volunteers and well-formed routines which ensured smooth operation of the race. In the busy time before the race it was challenging to see where to squeeze in volunteers who might not speak even English and who might be used to very different routines. The only way to succeed was through personal contacts with the ones already responsible for a certain field. There were some reluctant to offer surveillance as it put extra burden on their shoulders but there were others who were willing to take care of volunteers. This way it was well operating to engage volunteers in areas like track signing, feed station, start-finish marshalls, etc.

Activities volunteered by foreign volunteers

At SELA, Czechia

- Race office - packing bags, starting numbers and commemorative t-shirts
- Logistic facilities - tour of the storage area for the supply of refreshment stations, for marking and securing the route
- Ensuring the safe passage on the track and ensuring the road closure just after the start of the race
- Operating the feed stations – helping with offering food for racers
- participation in the finish of the race and the ceremony

At Crosskovácsi, Hungary

- Feed stations – Young volunteers were asked to help at feed stations in all its aspects. It included water supply, filling up the food supplement, offering competitors the food and drink, refilling competitors drinking bottles, ensuring safe passing by of racers next to food stations
- At the finish cutting chips from starting numbers –congratulating racers on finishing the race, cutting the chip part for time measurement and collecting them.
- on the track after the race when cleaning the markings - passage of a section of the route by off-road vehicle, removal of plastic tapes and directional markings.

At Salzkammergut Trophy, Austria

- feed stations – the organization was very similar, but the range of choice of food and drink was significantly larger. Higher budget allows generous facilities for refreshment stations, everything was perfect!
- race commissars in the unicycle congress - the arrival of the race to the city centre means passing through many lanes that must be secured by the organizer. Everything was prepared, local people “live” with this event, minimal conflicts in the regulation of the car traffic.
- preparation of advertising elements at the start and finish area in Bad Goisern - installation of advertising boards, we admire the production warehouse of the organizer in the city centre. The former department store offers huge opportunities for year-round preparation and storage of production equipment.
- construction and dismantling of the start in Bad Ischl - deployment of mobile fences, inflatable gates, advertising boards and flags for the start of route D. Very interesting experience in preparing the event in a busy spa town.

At Horal, Slovakia

- preparation of the route to Kráľová hole at an altitude of almost 2,000 m above sea level - installation of route dividers in the bidirectional section.
- Preparation of start and finish area
- Feed stations –. Volunteers helped with refreshment in the finish of the race, where there was a generous "finish" zone.
- service of competitors and organizers in the catering tent - assistance in dispensing food and drinks
- operation of competitors in the bicycle storage

Conclusions from the volunteers on challenges when participating at foreign events

From the observation sheets and from oral feedbacks the main challenges foreign volunteers faced were:

- Language difficulties
- Different routine from what is used to
- Not enough possibilities and challenges in volunteering
- No adequate tools provided

Not speaking the language of the hosting country and communicating either in English or in German made understanding difficult. Also, misunderstandings were sometimes sprang from trying to adopt methods and techniques which were used at the home race in the new environment which sometimes just didn't fit. Many times, although there was will to be more active, the lack of adequate tools prevented these activities. As a conclusion very precise preparation from the hosts with descriptions using visual instruction, oral orientation, ensuring tools could minimize these problems.

Some conclusions and recommendations from organizers

SELA:

Cooperation with foreign young volunteers was great! It should be noted that all the time they were accompanied by the "adult" representatives of the ENI Project Sports Clubs and all young volunteers had experience of helping at the races.

But there is always something at every event that can inspire others. For example, it was interesting for Austrian representatives to supply refreshment stations with drinking water from stainless steel tanks on a trailer.

A challenge could be that some of young foreign volunteers (including "domestic" volunteers) may not be well oriented in the venue. In order to do everything, it is absolutely necessary to require punctuality, because the time delay then brings complications. Organizers must be very careful when planning the activities.

Crosskovácsi

It was surprising to experience that there are sometimes very different methods for the solution of similar problems. Some foreign volunteers were for example puzzled not to see here as many track marshalls as they were used to in their events. The fact that Crosskovácsi used very precise and advanced track signing and marking methods to ensure safety and good orientation had to be highlighted. It functioned perfectly in the given conditions and replaced the need for human resources at often hard to reach places. Another excellent example of good practice highlighted by observers was a mobile warehouse - a container for storing production material. All equipment at the start and finish area was provided efficiently and economically, in proportion to the size of the event.

Salzkammergut Trophy

This is Austria's biggest MTB marathon, with 1,200 volunteers, over 5,000 participants, and with more start and finish areas so was exciting to see how all these were managed.

The main operating team was a small bunch of people, but visitors were surprised by the huge number of sub-organizers with a clearly defined scope of work. In Austria each

volunteer will receive 30 Euro + support catering at the end of the event. This can create a form of 'pay' and volunteer responsibility for the work done.

Horat Marathon

The real alpine MTB marathon, many stretches in hard-to-reach places with a start area in Svit in the heart of the town.

It was surprising that the volunteers average age was certainly over 50 and more. Their new mission is to rejuvenate the team, which started partially thanks to the project. Experiencing how volunteering is arranged in mountain environments was educational.

For more observation sheets and for the photo and video reports made on the event please visit our website at www.mtb4eu.net .



Annex 2: Photo and video reports

The Project ENI includes the integration of young volunteers at Outdoor Sport Events. In addition to attending local events, it was also important for young people to be involved in documentation of the visits and to contribute to successfully completing the project.

The photo and video reports captured the race weekends from the point of view of the young volunteers. In order to present the project in a uniform manner, rules were initially drawn up as to how the implementation of the video and photo reports should look.

In the videos, it was important, above all, to map the images with the mobile devices in landscape format in order to ensure a uniform format output in the first place. Furthermore, the output of 1920x1080 is displayed optimally on most screens and the video is best visible. So that we can also integrate photos in the videos, the photos were mostly taken in landscape format.

In the foreground of the videos is the mapping of activities in the context of the visits of the Eni volunteers and their integration into the event process. In the end, the goal was to give a summary of the weekend and to finalize an overall video that summarizes the project year.

In the photo reports the approach was similar to the videos. All were instructed to implement the recordings in a uniform format, so that in the end a good quality of the reports can be achieved. Through the task all were also on the weekends endeavoured to implement the tasks and to hold himself or his friends while practicing the activities and also to make funny photos for the reports. The interaction between the young people was motivated by all partner countries to work together and photograph each other.

The reports were also posted on social media to make the activities and impressions of the race weekends visible to all club members and motivate others to get involved in the project and to participate.

By creating the reports, the volunteers once again have the opportunity to summarize the experiences of the weekends and to collect the best scenes.

Links:

<https://www.facebook.com/ENIproject>

Photo-Reports:

<https://www.mtb4eu.net/en/results>

Video-Reports:

<https://www.mtb4eu.net/en/results>

