

VOLUNTEERING  
INFRASTRUCTURE IN EUROPE  
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## **Volunteering Infrastructure in Europe Publication**

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## 1.VOLUNTEERING INFRASTRUCTURE CONCEPT DEFINITION

As of 2020 there continues to be four levels of administration in Spain: the state/national level managing matters of general interest; the regional (autonomous community) governments, in charge of matters of interest in the 17 autonomous communities plus 2 autonomous cities (Ceuta and Melilla in Northern Africa); the province level (diputaciones) focuses on matters that are specific to the 50 provinces, and the local level, the one which is closest and most directly in touch with citizens, has competencies with regards to local community participation and citizenship. This political and administrative structure has as consequence the organisation of the volunteering sector at three or four levels. An exhaustive analysis of the volunteering infrastructure in Spain would therefore require reference to be made to all these levels. This chapter will only touch upon the national level, with some examples and references made concerning the regional level. This is because although now there is some data and studies from autonomous communities, they are not systematised, therefore, the reliable information remains at the national level.

Given the above-mentioned complexity of the administrative apparatus, and the enormous diversity of the regions of Spain, in terms of size, population, economic development, culture, landscape etc., it is nearly impossible to have a uniform analysis of the volunteering infrastructure in Spain. Each region, province and locality have its own mechanisms designed to support, promote, channel, enhance and finance volunteering within its area of responsibility.

Volunteering infrastructure in Spain can, however, be considered under two approaches: on the one hand, the public infrastructure, and on the other hand the infrastructure of the volunteer sector itself, which is closely linked to the third sector, citizens' participation and is, in a way, a reflection of Spain's administrative structure.

Following Max Weber's two main logics on social activism, which set distinctions between the purposive/instrumental rationality (logic) and the value/belief-oriented rationality (logic), we can identify reasoning that led to the creation of volunteering infrastructure both "vertically", in terms of infrastructure created by the state and "horizontally", when it comes to the infrastructure created by the volunteering movement. The infrastructure for volunteering has been constituted on the basis of ideological reasons and sometimes seeking compliance with other values and purposes aimed at achieving a rationalisation of the sector.

**Table 1. Logic Purposive and Value Oriented Rationality**

The logic of ideas. Ideological logic	With the logic of ideas we refer to ideologies underlying political parties/political groups and therefore to those who govern at any given time an administration and that have an impact in the infrastructures of volunteering. The ideologies are fundamental to understand the infrastructure of volunteering in Spain. The territorial organisation of the Spanish State originates different ideas in just one State: regions, provinces or municipalities. This means that we have similar ideas (conservative, liberal, socialist) or very diverse ones that are then mirrored into measures and services equally similar or different depending on the territory.
Normative logic	By normative logic we mean the set of rules and laws (in any form: Law, Decree, Order, Statute of Autonomy, etc.) that have been used by governments to regulate volunteering or the regulations that the organisations themselves have

Organisational and Executive Logic	Here we refer to all of the agencies that manage volunteering policies that have been driving the different administrations. Such bodies can be only administrative or also mixed, that meaning that there is participation of the voluntary movement.
Control Logic	By control logic we mean all the instruments that governments have created to control the organised voluntary movement. These control systems have a creditor or enabler character since they are used to legalise and by that empower an organisation or to credit them in order for them to be financed.
Economic Logic	We understand that economic logic is what allows volunteering organisations to create different sets of funding.
Informational Logic	The means by which the national and regional governments advertise volunteering. Media, publications, events etc.

**Table2. Logics<sup>1</sup> of the Vertical Infrastructure for Volunteering**

Source: Compiled by the author, Ariño A. (Dir) (2007:540), Ballesteros (2010)

The logic of ideas. Ideological <sup>2</sup>	Conservative. Liberal. Social-Democrat Mixed -Mediterranean	Which are present in governments: general, regional or provincial/ local.	
Normative logic	Standards and Regulations for the establishment, operation, funding of voluntary organisations.	Type	Law, Decree, Order, Statute of Autonomy
		Field	National, Autonomous, Provincial, Regional, Local.
		Extension	All types of volunteering: Social, environmental, cultural, civic volunteering, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Each of these logics in the creation and maintenance of the infrastructures are done at national, regional, provincial or even at local level.

<sup>2</sup> The ideas underlying the design, implementation and functioning of the infrastructures are essential since they mark their direction and shape and they can even be in contradiction because the different levels of the administrative bodies can be influenced by different ideas

Organisational and Executive Logic	Public Organisational Structure	General administrative bodies, autonomous and provincial.	-Ministry, Departments, Agencies, Offices, etc. -Directorate. (Welfare, Culture, Education, Justice, Interior, Environment). -Provincial Delegation.
		Joint bodies: Administration and voluntary organisations of coordination and consultation. Public foundations. Singular entities: ONCE, Red Cross, Caritas. Boards, Commissions, Institutions	
	Volunteering plans	Extension or field	National, Autonomous, Provincial, Regional, Local.
Control Logic	Registers with empowering or creditor character.	General or specific	National, Autonomous, Provincial, Regional, Local.
		Territorial scope	Associations, Foundations, by volunteering areas (social, cultural, environment, development cooperation, etc.
Economic logic	Programmes	and/or agreements	Directly to NGOs. National, Autonomous, Provincial, Regional, Local
Informational Logic	Promotion and support. Analysis and Diagnosis	Conferences and workshops	National, Autonomous, Provincial, Regional, Local
		Publications Web's, Media	National, Autonomous, Provincial, Regional, Local
		Observatories, Studies	National, Autonomous, Provincial, Regional, Local
		Conferences and meetings Reports, Surveys, etc.	National Congress, Congress or Conferences Autonomous, Provincial, Regional, Local

**Table 3. Logics of Horizontal Volunteering Infrastructure**

Source: Compiled by the Author, Ariño A. (Dir) (2007:540), Ballesteros (2010)

		Organisation(s) primary volunteering	Voluntary movement or secondary volunteering
Ideological	Conservative. Liberal. Social-Democrat Dissident.	Religious. Civic (political). Ecological. Philanthropic.	Different schools of thought coexist and socio-political analysis.
Normative logic	Private-public standard.  National or regional ethical codes. (Plataforma del Voluntariado de España, PVE)	Memorandum of Association or Legal status or attested documents (National, Autonomous, Provincial, Regional, Local) Regulations of the internal system	Statutes (Platforms, coordinators) Code of Ethics. Statements. Manifestos.
Organisational and Executive Logic	Public-private organisational structure	Organisations (Federations, networks or platforms)	Coordinators, Platform Networks (National, Autonomous, and Provincial)
		Directive bodies Executive bodies Supervisory bodies	Joint bodies: Councils, National and Regional Committees
		Mixed bodies.	
Control Logic	Records	Internal volunteers or federal entities	Associated members.
Action Logic	Plans, programmes and projects.		
Economic logic		Grants and concerts. Donations. Remunerated activities.	Grants and concerts. Donations.



Informational Logic	Promotion, support. Analysis and Diagnosis	Publications, studies. Web, Media	Publications, studies Web Media. Observatories Conferences and meetings. Reports, Surveys, etc.
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## 1.1 Functionality of the different infrastructures

The different actors forming the infrastructure for volunteering fulfil a variety of roles, according to the logic or reasons that inspired them and the form they take. Volunteer organisations, in their vast majority, take the legal form of associations or, less frequently, foundations. The exception to this are organisations considered a “unique entity” (Entidades Singulares), which are overseen by the state, such as the Spanish Red Cross, Caritas, National Organisation for the Blind (ONCE), which play a major role in social policy and also have large volunteering programmes. In order to ensure coordination and have a stronger weight in dialogue with different stakeholders, volunteer organisations created networks at different levels. Such are for instance the provincial networks (federations or platforms), regional platforms and national ones respectively. These bodies have the role of promoters and supporters of volunteering. For an organisation, belonging to a network or platform supposes legal and social support, as well as a self-acceptance of internal regulations and code of ethics.

On the other hand, government bodies have also established structures aimed to keep volunteering under the radar, promote, organise, promote and fund volunteering. The forms that these bodies have adopted are: Directorate General within a Ministry, Councils in some of the regional governments, regional agencies of volunteerism or institutes for volunteering in others and offices for volunteering in many provinces and cities in Spain. In most regions, these structures have joint, public and NGO participation.

Governmental structures for volunteering have certain control mechanisms over organisations, not only in terms of their registration policy but also through their funding policies. One may argue the degree of independence of voluntary organisations if we consider that public authorities can decide on the needs and issues in the volunteering sector for which funding is dedicated.

The role of analysis, research and dissemination of information is carried out mainly by platforms and volunteer resource centres, whether alone or in collaboration with public entities at the national or regional level. The national platform and some of the regional structures established volunteer observatories for this purpose. Their efforts are disseminated through digital magazines, newsletters, publications and events, such as congresses, conferences and training courses.

**3** Such are the observatories established geographically: Observatorio Nacional del Voluntariado, or thematically: Observatorio Andaluz de Voluntariado Universitario, Observatorio de Voluntariado Corporativo etc.

## 2. VOLUNTEERING LANDSCAPE

The most widely accepted definitions of volunteering could be considered those that have been included in the different laws that have been published. In Spain, there is currently one national law on volunteering as has been since the last publication and 15 regional laws, presented under the sub-chapter on the legal framework.

According to Spain's Law 45/2015, October 14th, on Volunteering, the concept of volunteering refers to activities of general interest, developed by individuals, provided they are not carried out under an employment relationship, civil service, commercial or any other form of payment and meet the following requirements:

- Are characterised by solidarity
- Are carried out by free will, without any personal or legal obligation.
- Are carried out without payment, without prejudice to the right to reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of the voluntary activity.
- Are developed through private or public organisations and under programmes or projects.

The law excludes, therefore, all forms of voluntary action that are isolated, sporadic or carried out by individuals for family reasons, friendship or good neighbourliness, and makes specific reference to the fact that the role of voluntary activity is in no case to replace remunerated work.

Previously in Spain, there was the thought that there is a void in terms of data on volunteering nationwide. This aspect was highlighted by researchers in the field and was also one of the findings in the reports "Diagnosis on the status of volunteering in Spain" (2005, 2011) prepared by the Plataforma del Voluntariado de España (PVE) and published by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality respectively, and which in 2005 revealed "the absence of data or updated statistics on volunteering in Spain" and the "absence of a reliable record of volunteer organisations", confirming in 2011 that the problems identified previously, regarding the lack of data, "remain valid". There are serious contradictions or methodological shortcomings which translate into results limiting themselves to specific sectors or specific geographical areas. However, although some of these limitations still exist, the PVE has been essential in providing yearly studies that analyse different aspects of volunteering. Some recent and significant examples of these being 'This is who we are' (2018), 'Volunteering in the university environment reflections and proposals' (20 ) and 'Volunteer action' (2017).

The report "Study on Volunteering in the European Union" (2010) states "There is no exact information on the number of volunteers in Spain. However, according to the data gathered through the interviews, the number of volunteers in 2005 reached 5 million, which represents 12% of the population. Other sources suggest that the number of volunteers stood at around 1.1 million in 2002".

In 2007, the Spanish Volunteering Platform created the Volunteering Observatory. Since then, the PVE has led research and surveys and published reports on volunteering, among which "This is us: Profile of Social Volunteering in Spain" the annual reports "Facts and Figures of Volunteering" or the research series The Spanish Population and their involvement with NGOs".



However, in the PVE surveys, the criterion has been changed to adapt it to Law 45/2015. Therefore, since 2017, volunteering has been understood to be that which is carried out according to this law, leaving out informal volunteering. The estimated number of volunteers would be between 2.5 and 3 million people. Comparable data is not available, for other entities' surveys and studies refer to specific spheres of volunteering.

The Centre for Sociological Research includes one question on this topic in the October Barometer, Study 4 No. 3156 issued in October 2016 concludes that 2,4 million people over 18 participate in "other types of volunteering activity". However, the statements in both surveys differ so much that data cannot be compared. The figures are so different that the reliability of these surveys can be questioned.

The report in 2018 'This is us' seems to clarify the claims that the Volunteering Observatory Report (2016) made that there was a trend of feminization, however the new studies show it more as a structural issue more so than a trend. There are more women (54.4%) volunteering than males (45.6%). As for the age of the volunteers, according to the same study, 35,5% of volunteers were under the age of 35, (which means they over-represented, for this group accounts for 26.5% of the population), whereas senior volunteers accounted for 29.2% of volunteers (under-represented, for they account for 36% of the population).

## 2.1 Perception of volunteering

Previously there was a lack of general studies in Spain, there were no general surveys on volunteering. The diagnosis made in 2011 about volunteering states that in Spain there are no measurements on the social image of volunteering, in other words how society sees volunteers, or on the phenomenon of volunteering in the field of social action.

It also adds that, in general, being a volunteer is associated with the idea of joint action, unselfishness and the concern of the general well being of the society in which he lives. In this sense, it can be said that "solidarity" is an important value for the Spanish society. According to the data of the Eurobarometer (Spring 2008), for Spanish citizens, the value of solidarity was slightly above the European average. Solidarity is a value as important as "freedom" and would be the seventh most important out of the twelve values that the EU considers as European values.

Nonetheless, despite the lack of general studies in previous years the PVE has produced many over the last few years. The survey carried out by the PVE in 2016, included a question regarding trust on volunteering, and the above-mentioned report "Solidarity and Youth in Spain. The Voluntary Action in 2016" points out that the Spanish population highly values and trust in volunteering. According to their findings over 75% of respondents had much- very much trust. Furthermore, in a 2018 study done on entities within Spain (The voluntary work before the mirror) and their opinions. Out of those polled the large majority believed in the voluntary work, it was only a small sector of the elder respondents who were sceptical.

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4 CIS-Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas. 2011. Estudio nº 3.156. Barómetro de octubre. Available at: [http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default/-Archivos/Marginales/3140\\_3159/3156/es3156mar.pdf](http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default/-Archivos/Marginales/3140_3159/3156/es3156mar.pdf)  
5 [www.fundacionlealtad.org](http://www.fundacionlealtad.org)

The experience of volunteer organisations shows that society highly values volunteering and solidarity, although citizens, in general, are yet to include volunteering and solidarity in their basic culture as a core form of social participation. Organisations are supportive of the idea that schools should join the effort of educating for values and promote volunteering and solidarity.

In 2001 Fundación Lealtad came into being. “Fundación Lealtad is an innovative nonprofit institution founded in Spain. Its mission is to promote the trust and confidence of the Spanish society in NGOs, to achieve an increase in donations as well as any other type of collaboration with NGO. It offers individuals and companies independent, objective and consistent information on NGOs, to help them decide which NGO to collaborate with, and guide them in monitoring their donations. This information is based on the analysis of transparency that Fundación Lealtad provides free of charge to those NGOs who voluntarily request it.

Since the introduction of the “Ley del Voluntariado 45 2015” and the actions of the different organisations in the field, volunteers are becoming more visible in Spain. We can say that volunteers in Spain command a high level of respect and trust from the Spanish population and this is even higher among young people, without any differences between the genders. There is still not a very clear image about whether or not it is closely linked to political or religious beliefs and the opinions are always more favourable to the image of volunteering in those who have already engaged closely with an organisation.

## **2.2 Current overview of volunteering**

Since the 1990s, volunteering in Spain has been evolving, adapting, modifying its profile and functionality under the welfare state. Along with the traditional care-charity volunteering, more modern, professionalised, innovative forms and areas for volunteering appeared. Law 45/2015 reflects such evolutions and classifies volunteering into 10 areas or fields; besides the traditional social volunteering, leisure and free time or international volunteering for cooperation other areas come into a scene such as cultural, sport, educational, health, communitarian, social protection or environmental volunteering. Environmental volunteering is emerging, to support social ecology and environmental activism, thus going beyond the classic conservatism approach. The information society and new technologies also influenced the approach to volunteering and its organisation. Online volunteering has an increasing impact and e-activism developed as an advocacy strategy. The increase in life expectancy and improved health and living conditions resulted in a growing interest for older people to volunteer. Volunteering associated with major events and emergencies has considerably increased, as short-term involvement. Volunteering promoted by Corporations, which derived from the concept of corporate social responsibility, is still incipient but has a great potential for expanding.

It should equally be noted that there are critical aspects of the current state of volunteering in Spain. There is a shift in the motivational process towards a self-centred focus, reinforcing one's CV, expanding the social network, from the initial, solidarity driven motivation. There is also the tendency to institutionalise and “instrumentalise” volunteering, whether this is done by NGOs or public institutions, employees, businesses, media etc. These trends run the risk of not capitalising on spontaneous volunteers and become overly focused on market principles, such as management, effectiveness, efficiency, profitability.

Moreover, the state has transferred to the third sector social responsibilities that were, should or could be of the state. These transfers are caused by the change in the concept of citizenship and the growth of the third sector. The third sector has, in fact, grown significantly in the past decades, and these changes were driven by social dynamics and, supported by the state, the third sector found itself in a process of institutionalisation and empowerment in the delivery of social services. Within the third sector, voluntary organisations play a significant role, especially in the context of social policies and have increasingly gained an image as service providers, to the detriment of their initial alternative ethics essence.

## 3.LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR VOLUNTEERING AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

There is a complex legal framework for volunteering in Spain, following the complexity of the country's administrative structure. Below are the laws on volunteering that exist in Spain at the national and regional levels.

GENERAL LEGISLATION	
National level	<p>Law 45/2015, October 14<sup>th</sup>, on volunteering.</p> <p>Law 23/1998, July 7<sup>th</sup>, on International Cooperation and Development</p> <p>Order of October 11<sup>th</sup>, 1994, in which the voluntary activity is regulated in the public centres that teach the general system.</p> <p>Order of October 9<sup>th</sup>, 1995, that regulates cultural volunteering.</p>
Regional level <sup>2</sup>	<p>-Law 9/1992, October 7<sup>th</sup>, on Social Volunteering in Aragon.</p> <p>Law 4/1995, March 16<sup>th</sup>, on Volunteering in Castile - La Mancha.</p> <p>Law 1/1998, February 5<sup>th</sup>, regulates Social Volunteering in Extremadura (developed in Decree 43/2009, March 6<sup>th</sup>, which regulates the Social Volunteer Statute in Extremadura).</p> <p>Provincial Law 2/1998, March 27<sup>th</sup>, on Volunteering in Navarra.</p> <p>Law 7/1998, May 6<sup>th</sup>, on Volunteering in Rioja.</p> <p>-Law 4/1998, May 16<sup>th</sup>, on Volunteering in Canary Islands.</p> <p>-Law 3/1998, May 18<sup>th</sup>, on Volunteering in Balearic Islands.</p> <p>Law 17/1998, June 25<sup>th</sup>, on Volunteering in Basque Country.</p> <p>Law 4/2001, June 19<sup>th</sup>, on Volunteering in Valencia Community.</p> <p>Law 7/2001, July 12<sup>th</sup>, on Volunteering in Andalusia.</p> <p>-Law from the Principality of Asturias 10/2001, November 12<sup>th</sup>, on Volunteering.</p> <p>Law 5/2004, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, on Volunteering in Murcia.</p> <p>Law 8/2006, October 10<sup>th</sup>, on Volunteering in Castile and León.</p> <p>Law 10/2011, November 28<sup>th</sup>, of Voluntary Action in Galicia</p> <p>Law 1/2015, February 24<sup>th</sup>, on Volunteering in the Community of Madrid</p> <p>Law 25/2015, July 30<sup>th</sup>, on Volunteering and promotion of associative movement in Catalonia</p>

In Spain, the competency of volunteering at the national level is split between several ministries. As such, the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality has a Sub-directorate for NGOs and Volunteering, dealing with volunteering issues in general. Within this Ministry there is an important consultative body, the State Council of Social Action NGOs, which gives a platform for dialogue between social NGOs and the national government.

The Institute for Youth, INJUVE, under the same Ministry is tasked to promote volunteering among young people and manage European programmes, such as the European Volunteer Service. The Directorate for Civil Protection, within the Ministry of Interior is the governmental body responsible for civil protection volunteers. Similarly, at the regional government level there are departments (*consejerías*), replicating the role of directorates in the ministries at the regional level, in the field of social services, environment, culture etc.

These, therefore, have legislative and policy competences on volunteering at the regional/autonomous community level, environmental or cultural volunteering being for instance linked to these regional government departments. In local administration, at provincial or city level, there are also usually personnel responsible for social, civil protection, environmental and cultural services, who will deal with volunteering matters in the respective area of responsibility. Law 45/2015, on volunteering, means the repealing of the earlier Law 6/1996 incorporating some innovations like:

- A clearer definition of “volunteering” and its features; a more integrated concept of volunteering, adapted to the needs of the XXI century and establishing clear boundaries between what constitutes volunteering and what does not. In this sense, the reference to the “general interest” is a key element of the Law.
- It defines a new framework for voluntary action, listing values, principles and functions of volunteering, as well as the fields in which voluntary action can be expressed (10 different fields, that can be expanded in the future).
- For the first time, not only the rights and duties of volunteers and volunteering organisations are described, but it incorporates those regarding the beneficiaries of the voluntary action. The non-discrimination principles (both referred to volunteers and beneficiaries) is central in the law.
- Volunteering organisations gain a fundamental importance in this new Law, since for an activity to be considered as volunteering it must be channelled through a volunteering organisation.
- The Law confers a relevant role to new agents, universities and companies, stating clearly that they are not volunteering organisations, and that they would actions develop to promote volunteering need to be carried out through volunteering organisations.
- The call to companies and Public Administrations to promote or facilitate the participations of their (public) employees in volunteering activities, establishes that such activity must be done in such a way that volunteering will not become an instrument for the substitution or amortization of jobs occupied by workers or public services.
- The relationship between the General Administration and volunteering gets stronger, defining the creation of two new organisms: the Interministerial Commission on Volunteering and the National Volunteering Observatory.
- Last, but not least, the law is committed to the recognition of the competences acquired by volunteers, while volunteering, with a view to their personal or professional promotion or access to employment.



## 4. STRUCTURE OF THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR INVOLVED IN VOLUNTEERING

The structure of the non-profit sector in Spain is complex, reflecting the complex administrative structure of the state at different levels, national, regional, provincial and local. These aspects as well as the networking within the non-profit sector involved in volunteering are explained also in the first sub-chapter, particularly under the functionality of the different infrastructures.

The main non-governmental structure for volunteering coordination, promotion, advocacy and support, at the national level is Plataforma del Voluntariado de España (PVE). PVE was established in 1986 and currently comprises 80 organisations at regional and local level, including regional and provincial. The Volunteering Infrastructure in Europe Publication platforms, “unique entities”, such as the Spanish Red Cross, Caritas, ONCE, Spanish branches of international organisations such as Oxfam Intermon, etc., which according to the internal surveying account for over a million volunteers across Spain. The PVE is considered to be a benchmark for the coordination and systematisation of voluntary action in Spain.

Most of the autonomous communities have regional platforms or voluntary associations fulfilling the same function. National and regional platforms in many cases act as resource centres for volunteering, and carry out activities of promotion, consulting, training, research and advocacy. There are other networks not exclusively dedicating their efforts to volunteering but closely linked to it, such as the Platform of NGOs of Social Action and the Coordinator of Development NGOs, The European Network for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in Spain (EAPN-ES).

In January 2012, the Spanish Third Sector Platform came into being, encompassing mostly volunteer organisations, and aiming to be an agent of cohesion and coordination to defend the value of the social NGOs, the welfare state, social rights, and better the public-private partnership for the benefit of disadvantaged people. The seven organisations that make up the new initiative are the Platform of NGOs of Social Action, Plataforma del Voluntariado de España (PVE), the European Anti-Poverty and Social Exclusion in Spain (EAPN), the Spanish Representatives of People with Disabilities (CERMI), the Spanish Red Cross, Caritas Spain and the Spanish National Organisation for the Blind (ONCE).

Other organisations and networks that bring together multiple organisations that provide services to entities or volunteers are COCEMFE, the network of organisations for disabled people and foundations such as the Fundación Luis Vives, working to strengthen the social third sector.

The networking and cooperation between different volunteer organisations in Spain is relatively recent. There are still some features of individualism among organisations, including some competitiveness. As of 2020, the PVE have focused their intentions on developing the White Paper on Volunteer Organizations which aims to offer a portrait of what these organizations are like.

The PVE wants the White Paper to be current so they can enrich and update, for those who are interested (people, entities, institutions) in knowing that sector in detail can find in it a reliable reference. They offer an analysis of the data from the 80 entities and platforms that make up the PVE, after their responses to the questionnaire prepared for this purpose, however one must taking into account that the field work was interrupted by the pandemic with its broad and deep repercussions.



## 5. OTHER STAKEHOLDERS (STATE, PRIVATE, ETC.)

Volunteering in Spain is mainly supported by public and non-governmental, volunteer organisations. Also public authorities develop policies and programmes aimed to promote and support volunteering at the national, regional, provincial and local levels. For instance, a type of volunteering that is encouraged directly by the government is volunteering at public events, sports competitions, and cultural and social events. Civil protection is equally an important state-supported area; municipalities have a large number of civil protection volunteers, though they have a special status with respect to the volunteering sector.

Other public entities that directly promote volunteering are universities. Nearly all Spanish universities have their own programme for the promotion of volunteering, in collaboration with NGOs, and for the recognition of volunteering. In these universities, there are, for instance, systems that enable students to obtain credits in exchange for their voluntary social commitment and volunteering experience, under the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Businesses also have a role to play in supporting and promoting volunteering. Corporate social responsibility is a relatively new matter in Spain, meaning that the corporate promotion of volunteering is still in development. Yet there are already some great experiences among companies developing employee volunteer programmes for its employees, either directly or through their own foundations, such as Caixa, Repsol, Mutua Madrileña and Fundación Telefónica, or members of the Club Sostenibilidad, the Voluntary Network or Foretica.

## 6. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Diagnosis on Volunteering developed by the PVE, as published by the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality states that "The Central Government and the regional governments fund 7 programmes and activities developed by volunteers in NGOs, but there is no public data available on what economic element is linked to voluntary activities. Beyond what exists in the State Budget, and their equivalents in the Autonomous Communities as well as the granting of funds. Due to no clear channel of communication, it is also still difficult to find information on how much do the Autonomous Communities invest in volunteering, in relation to what they're supposed to do and, therefore, to evaluate the changes. As the Spanish Volunteering Platform stated, "Only the Andalusia Plan and the Basque Plan on Volunteering show the economic items necessary for the implementation of each of the actions. In the rest of the plans it doesn't appear at all or it only indicates that it is the government of the community, the one in charge of distributing the budget items."

With regards to the sources of funding, volunteer organisations are still heavily dependent on the state, estimated to provide on average about 57% of the funding, whereas private funding is situated around 38%. Governmental funds can be obtained only by those organisations that have national presence. Foundations receive from the state 39 % (based on geographical area) and are self-funded in a proportion of 43%.

## 61 Sources of funding of volunteering bodies as: J. A.(2004:139)

Source: (J.A)(2004:139) and compiled by the author.

Donations	4,28%	Private donations	9,54%
Fees	11,21%	Sale/jobs	7,09%
Other forms	0,81%	Raffles and lotteries	2,32%
Municipal subsidies	12,94%	Community subsidies	0,97%
Regional subsidies	41,49%	State subsidies	9,35%

## 7.REGULAR AND SYSTEMATIC RESEARCH

During the last 20 years several renowned researchers have worked on volunteering, basically, describing and analysing different aspects of it. Given the complexity of the phenomenon it is difficult to analyse volunteering without needing to split it into different elements for study, from different perspectives, such as psychological, sociological, economical, political etc. All these research studies have led to theories and models of interpretation, which depict the diversity of volunteering.

There are, however, structural constraints in carrying out research in the sector, and most of the studies and reports have described the difficulties they face. Some of the difficulties described by researchers are: the difficulty of defining a volunteer and volunteering (which nowadays; the lack of accurate statistics that would allow probabilistic analysis; the weak collaboration of organisations that can provide accurate data on volunteering; the lively and dynamic character of volunteering; the institutionalization of volunteering; the incommensurability of altruism; the strong dispersion of information sources within the public administration.

As previously mentioned, several Volunteering Observatories have been established at the national and regional level in order to study and analyse volunteering permanently. Progress has been made in the research on volunteering and that is reflected in the production of literature (systematisation of practices, scientific articles, doctoral studies dissertations, regional research etc.). However, with the exception of specific studies, literature is generally based on secondary sources. It can be said that in the last five years there has been little information on volunteering in Spain based on primary sources, and that the lack of uniform and comparable data on volunteering at regional and national level is a major challenge faced by researchers in the field.

<sup>6</sup> Course descriptions contain 'learning outcomes' (i.e. what students are expected to know, understand and be able to do) and workload (i.e. the time students typically need to achieve these outcomes). Each learning outcome is expressed in terms of credits, with a student workload ranging from 1 500 to 1 800 hours for an academic year, and one credit generally corresponds to 25-30 hours of work.  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/ects\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/ects_en.htm)

<sup>7</sup> Such are the observatories established geographically: Observatorio Nacional del Voluntariado, or thematically: Observatorio Andaluz de Voluntariado Universitario, Observatorio de Voluntariado Corporativo etc.

<sup>8</sup> Rodríguez Cabrero, G.,(Coor.) (2003:181)

## 8. ETHICS AND QUALITY STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTEERING

In Spain, in the field of volunteering, ethics and quality are not seen as interrelated. The concept of quality volunteering is relatively new and there is little awareness of it on the side of volunteer organisations. Thus only large national organisations have begun processes to improve operations, practices and to evaluate results. Governmental institutions are trying to promote a quality approach with NGOs, with the aim of improving their efficiency and effectiveness.

In 2008 the Institute for the Quality of NGOs (ICONG) was created, with the aim of disseminating and promoting culture and the incorporation of quality systems in Social Action NGOs. ICONG is an independent, non-for-profit organisation formed by 12 social entities which manages the standard “NGO with Quality” by means of certification. As of 2020 there is a new code being created that should be implemented by the end of the year.

“NGO with Quality” is a Quality Management Standard created directly at the initiative of the third sector and it includes the most modern principles of organisational management, adapting them to the reality of social action. It is built on the conviction that every NGO that acts with quality requires a management system oriented towards efficiency.

Moreover, organisations working in cooperation for development adopted their own ethical code in 1998 and revised it in 2008. As of 2020 there is a new code being created that should be implemented by the end of the year.

Different governmental bodies implement other systems of quality control of volunteering, but these control systems are almost always linked to funding processes.

## 9. AWARENESS OF VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

The dissemination and encouragement to volunteer are carried out by different entities in Spain. According to surveys made, the main and most efficient way to attract and recruit volunteers in Spain is personal testimonies. Most organisations therefore disseminate their activities and recruit volunteers through its committed members. The volunteering platforms are the national, regional and provincial level, promote volunteering, recruit and orient volunteers towards different organisations. There are several websites that are an important resource for the diffusion, guidance and referral of volunteers in our country, such as [www.hacesfalta.org](http://www.hacesfalta.org). There are also institutional campaigns, carried out in regions and municipalities on significant dates, such as the International Volunteer Day.

## 10. ADDITIONAL COUNTRY SPECIFICITIES

As previously mentioned, particularly in the context of the economic crisis, the state has transferred some responsibilities for social services delivery to the third sector. This resulted in an empowerment of the third sector, which in the last years grew into an overburdening in terms of expectations from voluntary organisations to tackle social problems. These developments make volunteering lose some of its essence as an ethical alternative to the established socio-economic systems and turn it more and more into a service provider, which can lead to contradictions if not confrontations with other organisations and even with the market.

The lack of reliable data on volunteering poses serious problems in completing studies and analysis on volunteering. It becomes therefore a challenge for the coming years to create a system that allows accurate data to be produced, avoiding excessive control which would eliminate the essence of volunteering. This problem is twofold.

On the one hand voluntary organisations are not overly concerned about knowing the real micro and macro data on volunteering. This is a great unconsciousness because in this way, it will be difficult to know the size and characteristics of volunteering, to promote and advance it, and to empower volunteer organisations by having evidence based information on the important role they play in the society. In many cases organisations do not have reliable data on the number of volunteers and basic data on them. At best, they have a record of personal data that serves recruitment purposes, but cannot feed into a broader profiling of volunteering.

On the other hand public authorities still do not seem to have realised the important role that volunteering not only as a service provider but also as a backbone and catalyst of values in our society. A reflection of this lack of understanding is the fact that, to date, there isn't any basic study from the national or regional Statistical Institutes on volunteering, the only way to acquire any data has been from the responses to surveys over the last few years.

## **11.RECOMENDATIONS**

It must be noted that some progress has been made in research, and we have a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of volunteering.

- However, more knowledge is needed about why volunteering continues to be a feminised activity and why it does not grow as other forms of collaboration with entities tend to do.
- A vital challenge although difficult is to give homogeneity to the data of entities and volunteers in the different Autonomous Regions
- On the other hand, the present time poses the need to see what kind of response is given from volunteerism to the development of the ODS.
- Finally and importantly in correlation with the present time, is the necessity to see how volunteering is being configured in the "post-covid19" world.

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