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A Handbook for **SCI**  
**activists** and  
**volunteers**



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Long Term  
Volunteering  
in **SCI**

third edition  
2004

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# INTRODUCTION

Dear volunteer,

You are holding in your hands the third edition of the Long Term Volunteer Handbook. The first edition was created in 1991 by a group of people that participated in a seminar called "Beyond the workcamp". In 1996 the Long Term Resource Centre published an updated version of the handbook. And now it is a time to introduce a renewed publication. The newly created editing team consists of former LTVs and people working with LTV exchanges in different countries.

The biggest change we made was making this handbook only for volunteers. Organisations received their own manual for running the Long Term exchanges in 2002 and a handbook for the hosting projects is planned to be issued during 2005.

This handbook is meant to be useful information for people who are thinking of doing a Long Term Voluntary service and a preparation package for the ones who have already been accepted as LTVs. Even though we are not going into details about the European Voluntary Service (EVS) in this handbook since there is enough information available on the specific aspects of EVS exchange, we still believe that this handbook can be useful also for EVS volunteers. Many aspects of voluntary service are still the same, no matter how the project is funded.

In this handbook you can find brief information about SCI and the activities of the Long Term Exchange Group. Besides that, the handbook provides information on application procedures, rights and duties of the volunteer, insurance, visas, support system and process of returning home. The quotations used throughout the handbook are from volunteer reports published in Long Term News. On top of it, you can find a few full reports at the end of the handbook. Hopefully they will give you some insight to what a LTV project and experience can turn into.

We hope that you will find this handbook useful and inspiring. As a volunteer going through your own process, you might come up with comments or suggestions on how to improve this handbook. We would be more than happy to get your contribution! A handbook like this is always a working process and we welcome you to make it better and more useful for your followers!

Wishing you enriching time as a LTV,  
*Minna Vigren and Anya Belousova*

# SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL

Service Civil International (SCI) is an organisation working for peace, international understanding and solidarity, social justice, sustainable development and respect for the environment through international voluntary work. Today there are over 35 branches and groups in four continents, most of them in Europe and Asia. In countries where there is no SCI branch, SCI works together with like-minded organisations. There are over 50 partner organisations all over the world.

The roots of SCI lie in the international anti-military and pacifist movement. It was founded just after World War One by a Swiss Pacifist and Quaker, Pierre Ceresole. The idea of practical reconstruction and reconciliation work was first realised near Verdun, France, in 1920 in a small village heavily damaged by the war. A group of volunteers from countries that had been on opposite sides during the war worked together to build houses for several months. They wanted to show that living and working together with mutual respect was possible. At the same time, the camp was seen as a learning experience for all people involved in it.

Since then, SCI's work has changed a lot, but some of the basic elements still exist. Nowadays the workcamps are organised mostly during summer and they last from two to four weeks. The number of volunteers in the camp varies from six to twenty, but is usually around ten. The minimum age is 18. The work is usually practical and doesn't require special skills. It can be harvesting in an ecological farm, organising animation for disabled people, helping to organise a festival or renovation work on cultural sites. It is always non-profit and does not replace paid labour. Besides work, workcamps have a study part to discuss and learn more about the theme of the camp, or about peace issues. Work, as well as all other tasks in the camp are shared between the volunteers and so the participants create their own mini-society for the duration of the camp.

Even if workcamps are the main activity of SCI, they are not the only activity. For those who want to volunteer for longer periods, there are long term volunteering projects up to one year. SCI also organises seminars, campaigns and trainings where activists from different

countries come together to share experiences, learn more and plan future actions together.

SCI has split up its activities into different working groups. In Europe, the working groups are mainly focusing on different regions. These working groups are the Africa Working Group, Abya Yala (Latin America), SAVA (Balkans), Midi (Mediterranean) and GATE (post-Soviet countries). Besides that there are the Youth and Unemployment Working Group (YUWG), which works together with disadvantaged youth and the Long Term Exchange Group (LTEG) for Long Term Volunteering. In Asia, the working groups are formed by themes. These are Refugees, Peace & Human Rights, Environment & Development and Women. Branches, which are members of the international working groups, usually have a national working group on these themes and have meetings, organise trainings and other activities.

To find out more about the activities and working groups of the branches, feel free to contact them and get involved! Joining the SCI activities of the branch before becoming a Long Term Volunteer is a good way to get into the SCI life and to get trained, as you will be asked many questions about your organisation. During your LTV period, it is a way to meet people and have an alternative way of spending time if you are working for example in a community somewhere in the countryside. And after your LTV service, you are most welcome to come and share your experiences with the LTV or any other of the working groups of your branch. You might be interested in becoming a contact person for volunteers of your country, organising a training for outgoing volunteers, looking for new hosting projects, organising workcamps, being a camp leader or just writing an article for the members' magazine.

To find out more about the history of SCI, check the website of SCI international <http://www.sciint.org>.

Also the following publications, which should be available in your branch, include articles about the history of SCI:

Kimmig, Michael: **Co-ordinating together ÐA manual for training co-ordinators** (published by GATE).

Vroemen, Liesbeth: **Someone Had An Idea... Connecting Vision and Action in SCI** (published by VIA Netherlands).

# LONG TERM ACTIVITIES IN SCI

## DEVELOPMENT OF LONG TERM ACTIVITIES

In the first few years of SCI volunteers worked for periods of several months. As SCI grew bigger and involved more volunteers, the emphasis changed to providing summer work for volunteers in 2-4 week projects. By the 1970s and 1980s, there were very few longer term activities.

Nowadays SCI feels an increasing need to involve people after workcamps and on a longer term basis. Since the end of 1980s, several activities were organised to develop Long Term Volunteering in SCI. As a result of a seminar held in 1989 the Long Term Resource Centre was established. The LTRC was run by a few SCI activists and their tasks included spreading information on LTVing, advising national working groups and international bodies on LTV issues, maintaining files on LTV activities and reports from volunteers, and producing publications such as the first two editions of this handbook, Long Term News and leaflets.

As result of another seminar held some years later, national Long Term Working Groups were established in a number of SCI branches, including Germany, Finland and the Netherlands. In October 1992, the first Long Term Festival was held to provide volunteers with the opportunity to meet and discuss how to develop LTVing in SCI. In the first festival, an international working group called the Long Term Support Group (LTSG) was established. This group consisted of 10 members from national LTV working groups, LTRC and other working groups and executive committees of SCI. The LTSG organised activities such as the LT Festival, training events and evaluations.

## LONG TERM EXCHANGE GROUP

After some quiet years in the late 1990s, the tradition of Long Term Festivals was brought back in 2000. The new international cooperation was first mainly between Germany and Finland, which had stronger national working groups. The group was called **Long Term Exchange Group (LTEG)**.



In 2003, after one year of preparation, the decision was taken to apply for the status of a recognised working group of SCI. As a working group, LTEG will officially become the body in SCI who takes decisions on LTV exchanges. In a seminar held in Germany, a Steering Group of four people were selected and a Plan of Action for 2004 created. The supporting branches of the new working group were Germany, Finland, Italy, Switzerland and USA. The working group is open for all people who are interested to work on developing LTV activities in SCI.

The **mission** of the Long Term Exchange Group is to promote the aims of SCI by organising Long Term Volunteer exchange.

The long-lasting commitment LTVs make to their projects enables sustained work for peace, both on a concrete level for the branches, partners and hosting projects, and on a personal level for the volunteer and the members of the community. LTEG considers LTV exchange as an essential activity of SCI complimentary to workcamps.

**Aims** of LTEG are to:

- strengthen and improve LTV activities in SCI
- involve more branches and partners in LTV exchange
- seek recognition for LTV exchange in SCI

To reach their aims LTEG will

- publicise the benefits of LTV inside and outside SCI
- co-ordinate LTV activities internationally
- facilitate cooperation among the branches and partners
- standardise the exchange process
- assist branches, partners and working groups to develop LTV activities

- evaluate and improve LTV activities of SCI
- be a platform for new ideas and ways to do LTVing.

LTEG continues to publish Long Term News, organises the training seminar for placement officers in the spring and continues the tradition of Long Term festivals in the form of a seminar and an autumn meeting of the working group. Besides that, LTEG is working to create a website and database of volunteer reports, producing handbooks and providing tools for branches to run the exchanges in the form of Practical Procedures, Vacancy List and address lists.

## VACANCY LIST

The Vacancy List is a listing of available LTV positions in SCI and its partner organisations, published by LTEG on the 15th of every second month. In the Vacancy List you can find basic information of the project, description of the work, requirements for the volunteer, details on the accommodation, food and pocket money and the application deadline. Currently a new Vacancy List system is being worked out. During 2004 it is planned that the listing will start working as database on the Internet where the information on free places is regularly updated and where volunteers can search for places with a search engine.

To receive information on the free vacancies, please contact your national branch.

## LT NEWS

LTEG publishes a newsletter three times a year. This newsletter includes updates on what is happening in LTEG and in the national LTV working groups and reports from volunteers. The aim is to create links between the volunteers who are in projects and provide a means of communication for branches and activists of LTEG. Old issues of the newsletter can be found at <http://www.sciint.org/LTEG/>. The newsletter depends on the contributions from volunteers and we encourage everyone to write a small report of their experience. You can subscribe for the newsletter at [LT-News-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:LT-News-subscribe@yahoogroups.com). The editors can be contacted at [lteg@sciint.org](mailto:lteg@sciint.org).

## PLACEMENT OFFICER TRAINING

In the spring LTEG organises a training for the placement officers, volunteers who will work on the workcamp exchanges in SCI offices. In the five-day training the participants get familiar with the history,

ideology and structures of SCI, the different aspects of LTVing and the technicalities of their work as a placement officer.

## SEMINAR AND AUTUMN MEETING

In September/October of every year, LTEG organises its annual Autumn Meeting. Before the meeting, there will be a seminar to discuss and work on some of the most important topics. To find out more about the content of the seminar and how to apply, please contact your branch or follow the announcements in the mailing list.

## MAILING LIST AND WEBSITE

LTEG has a mailing list of approximately 50 subscribed members. To subscribe, write to [scimltv-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:scimltv-subscribe@yahoogroups.com). The website (<http://www.sciint.org/LTEG/>) has been under construction for quite some time already, but you can download LT News there. The aim is to finalise the website during 2004.

# PRACTICALITIES OF LTV EXCHANGE

## DEFINITION OF LONG TERM VOLUNTARY WORK

*Working as an LTV means more to me than just working. I have the possibility to learn a lot of new things, to see new countries, people and cultures. To live with people from different nationalities, to work together and to help each other. By making this new step in my life, I broaden my mind and learn more about myself.*

*Joost Witdoeck, LTV in Switzerland*

**LTV** stands for **Long Term Volunteer** and it is used in SCI to refer to all volunteers committing to a project for more than one month. The volunteer is provided with food, accommodation and some pocket money and s/he can be insured by the SCI Insurance scheme. Travel costs to the project are generally covered by the volunteer. There are no age limits to be a LTV.

**EVS** stands for **European Voluntary Service** and it is a part of the YOUTH programme – a European Commission programme that promotes the mobility of young people through international activities with a non-formal education dimension such as youth exchanges, voluntary services, youth initiatives and training of youth workers (more info is available on <http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth>).

About half of the LTV positions in SCI are currently financed by EVS. This means that the volunteers have no costs for their voluntary service: travel, insurance, pocket money and language course are paid by the EU. EVS is open for volunteers between 18 and 25 years from EU countries and from the so called Programme countries (please check the list at <http://www.sosforevs.org>). Some National Agencies have special prioritisation for volunteer selection and the programme is often used only for sending volunteers who otherwise wouldn't have a chance to spend a longer time abroad (for example, university students can apply for an exchange at their university). EVS volunteers are insured under the programme and can also have children's benefits covered during their volunteer service. This is not offered through other programmes. There are several trainings arranged for EVS volunteers: a pre-departure training in their home country, an on-arrival training in their host

country, a mid evaluation during the project and an evaluation seminar at the end. Every volunteer can do only one EVS, but after a voluntary service there is a chance to apply for funding for a follow-up project under the title 'Future Capital'. Further information on EVS can be obtained from your SCI branch, from the YOUTH National Agency of your country or from <http://www.sosforevs.org>.

At the moment, there are about 20 branches and partners regularly exchanging LTVs. Most of the posts are still in Western Europe and USA, but there is a growing interest to develop Long Term Volunteering in Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia.

LTV projects in SCI can be roughly divided into three categories:

More than half of the positions are in various kinds of **communities** and **centres**. Some of the projects are so-called 'Living communities' where the volunteer lives and works together with the people of the community. But there are also projects where the work is in a centre or institution, but the volunteer doesn't share the daily life with the inhabitants and colleagues. The work in communities and centres can be organising activities for physically or mentally disabled children or adults, teaching English for orphans or participating in running the community by doing various tasks from gardening to renovation.

Mainly during the summer time, many LTVs work in **SCI offices** doing the placement of workcamp volunteers. The work is quite administrative, fairly hectic in the first months of the placement season, but working in a SCI office gives the volunteer a chance to learn a lot about SCI and participate in the activities of the branch. There are also some other office volunteer posts in the SCI and partner organisation offices and Secretariats and in other **NGOs** outside the summer season and focusing on other office work.

Besides these, there are also specific projects like the **EcoMessengers** in 2001 and the **Human Rights Messengers** in 2003. In these projects, volunteers ran workshops on their respective theme in workcamps, visiting NGOs and working on a publication on their topic.

## CRITERIA FOR VOLUNTEERS

Although positions are open to people of all sex, age, race, religion and ideology, it is necessary to point out some criteria for the selection of volunteers. It is important to find the 'right' volunteer for the 'right' project. This is essential for both the project AND the volunteer.

These are the recommendations for finding suitable volunteers for projects:

- There is a minimum age of 18 to become a LTV. Volunteers are expected to have a certain amount of life experience meaning that s/he can look after one's self, work independently and be able to deal with any problems that might occur during the time the volunteer is abroad.
- The applicant should be open-minded towards the project and motivated for the WORK of the project (not only as a travelling experience).
- The applicant should know what volunteering is about, preferably by having participated in SCI workcamps.

We say preferably because we don't want to exclude those volunteers who have not done a workcamp, but are actually very motivated and realise what volunteering is about. We also don't want to stress SCI-experience too much as we want to encourage volunteers from non-SCI countries and volunteers who have valuable experience with other organisations.

If a volunteer has workcamp experience, then s/he has met with an international group of people, lived in basic living conditions and knows what to expect from a project's living and working conditions. This can be important as LTV work can demand a lot of initiative and independence.

- The volunteer should be interested in SCI and wants to be involved in the SCI branch of the hosting country (if one exists).  
If volunteers already have SCI experience, they can act as ambassadors of SCI, linking SCI with projects or with non-SCI organisations that are like-minded. Volunteers are encouraged to participate in long term working group or branch activities, and keep in contact with the hosting SCI branch.
- SCI leaves it to the project to decide about specific requirements, for example age limitations, language skills or other special skills. This is in contrast to workcamps, where special skills are generally not required.

## CRITERIA FOR PROJECTS

At international meetings and seminars, SCI has discussed criteria for projects receiving LTVs. Projects should meet some minimum criteria to

ensure that volunteers work under acceptable conditions. The following criteria are recommended by the Long Term Exchange Group.

- The project should support the aims and objectives of the International Constitution of SCI (see <http://www.sciint.org/docs/constitution.html/>).
- Voluntary work should be an important component of the project's ideology. We recommend that the project be a registered non-profit organisation, not simply an individual or a group of people.
- The project should be aware that the LTV should not be treated as cheap labour nor should the volunteer replace paid labour. Volunteers should only work in projects where their input is truly needed. The project should treat the LTV on equal terms with employed people and/or other volunteers on the project.
- The project should provide the volunteer with enough work to make the volunteer feel useful but not so much that they feel used (not an easy balance as it differs from person to person).
- The project should provide the LTV with sufficient training to be fully capable to do the work s/he is expected to do (including language training if necessary) and specify a contact person for his/her training and personal guidance. The training might be provided by other organisations too, but it should be counted as work time.
- The project should provide continued support and supervision during the entire term of service.
- The LTV should participate in team work. The project should enable the volunteer to work and live together with other people to avoid social isolation.
- The project should be responsible for the social integration of the volunteer. The volunteer should be allowed enough free time for themselves and the opportunity to participate in social activities.
- The project is responsible for providing housing and board for the volunteer. This can be simple, but should be at the same standard as volunteers and staff.
- The project should provide transportation to and from work.



- The project should provide the LTV with monthly pocket money, if possible.

In the case where the project is unable to provide these minimum requirements for the LTV, the receiving branch is responsible to find those things necessary for a successful LTV experience, before placing the LTV on the project. The volunteer needs to know the conditions of the position before accepting it. It is recommended that the project and the receiving branch have a contract between them, stating the agreed responsibility of each party.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

A volunteer interested in LTVing should contact his/her SCI branch or partner organisation to find out more about the conditions and practicalities of the application process. Although procedures vary from country to country, here is an example on how the LTV application process goes in the ideal case. For EVS posts the application process is more complicated. Please find out the details from the branch in your country.



### BEFORE THE EXCHANGE

A volunteer receives the Vacancy List with available LTV positions and chooses the one s/he is interested to apply for. The branch provides him/her with the standard LTV application form and with sufficient information on what it means to be a LTV. At this point it should be checked if the volunteer fits all the criteria, so that unnecessary work is not done by the branch nor by the volunteer. The volunteer should pay an application fee, which covers the administration costs. If the volunteer is not chosen for the position the fee will be returned to the volunteer.

After the volunteer has completed the application form and submitted it to the branch, the applicant is called for an interview or information seminar. This interview should be an informal meeting where the sending organisation has the chance to learn more about the applicant and the applicant about the organisation and LTVing. In the ideal case, the interview is done by a member of the sending organisation who has been a LTV him/herself and in the country or type of project where the applicant is willing to go. If this is not possible, it is advisable for the applicant to try to contact volunteers who have been to the same project to find out about their experiences. In some countries, there is a preparation seminar organised for people who have been selected as LTVs.

After the interview, the application form and a letter of recommendation written by the interviewer are sent to the organisation of the country where the project is located. The organisation will pass the application to the project, where the decision of accepting the volunteer is taken. The decision is communicated to the volunteer by the organisation of his/her country. A recommended maximum time to give the answer is two weeks. The application process goes through branches and the volunteers do not send applications directly to projects or organisations in other countries. This gives SCI the opportunity to monitor the quantity and quality of volunteers going to projects and to ensure that volunteers are well prepared for long term positions. It also enables SCI to support the volunteers and to ensure that projects meet certain criteria. Sometimes applicants apply for more than one vacancy at the same time. This created problems in the past when a volunteer was placed simultaneously in two branches, none of which knew of the other placement. Branches should encourage applicants to apply for only one vacancy at the same time.

#### AFTER BEING ACCEPTED

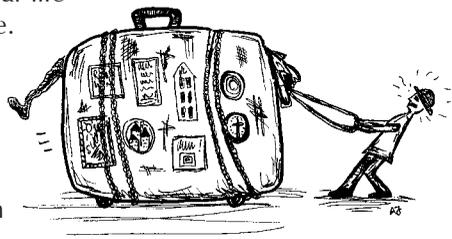
If the answer is positive, the volunteer is advised to be in contact with the project him/herself to arrange the practicalities. S/he should be provided with an infosheet which includes more information on the project and the work, advice on what to bring and possibly some information on the country. If a visa invitation is needed, the hosting branch should send an invitation letter to the volunteer. The hosting organisation should also take care that the volunteer is insured.

#### DURING THE EXCHANGE

During the project, both the sending and hosting organisation should stay in contact with the volunteer. In the project itself, a *work support person* should be appointed to the volunteer. This is the person to advise and help the volunteer with everything linked with the work. Another person from outside the project should be appointed as a *mentor*. The role of the mentor is to be a friend and help the volunteer to get started with social life and adjusting to a new culture.

#### AFTER THE EXCHANGE

After returning home, the sending organisation should contact the volunteer to discuss the experience more in-depth



and encourage the volunteer to get involved in LTV or other activities of the branch. Some branches organise an evaluation seminar for the returned volunteers.

## RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF LTVS

*Ö To a certain degree you are always an outsider because you know sooner or later you will leave and start a 'regular' life. On one hand it is liberating, you don't feel like chained to one place; you tend to take everything more easy, you can put up with many things that could normally get on your nerves since you understand that it is a temporary arrangement. On the other hand though, this situation doesn't invite any serious commitment and the truth is the more you are able to give the greater satisfaction you have. It is difficult and it seems kind of unnatural that first you make your home there and then you have to leave.Ö*

Michel Palmowski from SCI Poland,  
LTV in Innisfree Village, USA

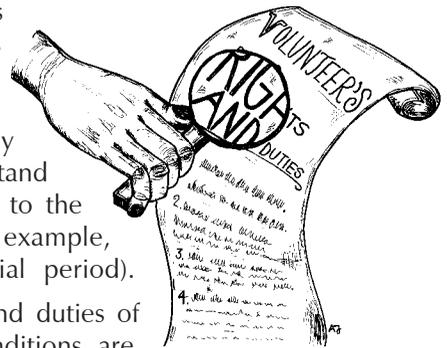
This chapter addresses important issues as it focuses on the rights of volunteers in long term projects. It is up to the branches and projects to see that the rights are respected, but it is equally important that the volunteers understand their duties in the project and keep to the agreements which are made (for example, working hours or length of the trial period).

To avoid conflicts about the rights and duties of volunteers we recommend that conditions are written down in a contract between the project, the branch and the volunteer. If it's not possible to make a contract, we still recommend to put an agreement down on paper.

These are recommendations only. Some projects might not be able to follow all the recommendations, but they can still be suitable projects for LTV placement. However, it is essential that the rights and duties of volunteers are clear to all those involved, including the SCI branch, project and volunteer.

### ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD

In general, doing long term voluntary work should not cost the LTV more than his/her travel costs between the country of origin and the country where the volunteer works. Project organisers need to be aware that some basic requirements should be provided for volunteers.



Food and accommodation costs should be paid for by the project. If it's not possible to arrange meals in the project itself, money should be made available for the volunteer to arrange meals for him/herself. If accommodation is outside the project, money to pay the rent should be available.

Accommodation must be arranged before the LTV arrives. It is very difficult for LTVs themselves to find suitable accommodation, as they are unfamiliar with the local area. They cannot be expected to know about the accessibility of accommodation or what reasonable rents are in the area. Coming from a foreign country, volunteers will need time to get adjusted to their new environment.

## INSURANCE

Insurance is an important requirement for both the volunteer and the project. If something serious happens to a volunteer, for example, in the case of permanent disability, it is essential that the volunteer is properly insured. The project, the volunteer, or even the hosting branch, can get into extreme financial problems if a volunteer is not covered by insurance.

In some cases the volunteer will have insurance in their home country which will also cover her/him while being abroad. Some volunteers also buy personal travel insurance for their trip. However this insurance is often inadequate, for example it might not cover accidents while working.

The project may already have a common insurance for all its workers/volunteers. Check this beforehand! If nothing is arranged yet, it may be possible to insure the volunteer under the SCI insurance scheme.



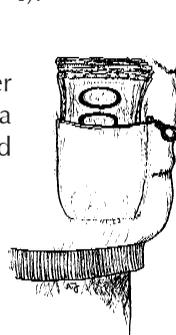
National insurance schemes may be cheaper than the SCI insurance, but it's important that the national insurance cover is at least equivalent to SCI insurance. One advantage of SCI insurance is that it covers expenses also in the home country of the volunteer (for example, if medical treatment is needed for a longer time). Check that other insurance schemes also offer this benefit.

However, the SCI insurance is designed to cover those items that are not covered under private or state insurance schemes. It does not cover the period of time volunteers are travelling to and from the project place or loss or damage of personal belongings. SCI insurance

has some limitations, for example only people between 16 and 65 years of age can be covered and people are not insured for illness existing prior to the period of insurance (see **Appendix I**).

## POCKET MONEY

Working as an LTV means that you accept to work under fairly basic conditions. However, it is important that as a volunteer you are able to take part in local activities and enjoy a social life with other people in and/or out of the project. The volunteer should have enough money to cover daily living expenses and some free time activities. The project or hosting branch should help the volunteer with travel costs within the country for joining SCI-events.



It is not possible to recommend a standard amount to be given by projects to volunteers for pocket money. Living expenses vary from country to country, so the amount of pocket money should reflect the standard of living in that country.

In some projects (for example, recycling projects) it may also be possible to provide the volunteer directly with clothes and other goods. One suggestion is ask recycling projects to sponsor your project by providing clothes and other goods for volunteers.

Travel costs to and from the project country are usually not paid by the project. This is a problem for many people, especially volunteers coming from low socio-economic backgrounds or from distant countries.

## WORKING CONDITIONS

*We want to remind branches that longer term volunteers are not cheap labour! In 1993, some LTVs had complaints about too long working hours and few possibilities for social contacts during office work. Please remember: Volunteers have the right to as much or more guidance as employees, and should also get support in developing a social life and orienting themselves in the country where they work. The receiving branch has a responsibility for guaranteeing this as well as proper lodging. We encourage all branches to appoint a contact person for LTV issues or support their volunteers to form a long term working group.*

*The Long Term Support Group  
to the European Committee Meeting of SCI.*

The working hours should be clear to both volunteer and project from the start of the project, including working hours per day, days per week. It may happen that a project expects a volunteer to work full-time or even more (if/he likes to work here anyway), while the volunteer

assumes that there will be plenty of leisure time (since I don't receive a full salary). Working hours should be based on the normal working hours of the project. Any language courses or other trainings should be counted as working time. It is possible that the project and the volunteer agree that when extra hours are done (for example, in the preparation of a special event), they can be later taken as days off. All the details of the working hours should be agreed on in the beginning of the project, preferably in a contract.

The volunteer should receive a fair amount of holidays. Some projects give volunteers special days off so they have a chance to join other SCI-events, such as meetings, workcamps, and seminars. This is of benefit to all involved, as the volunteer will feel more appreciated and have a chance to make contacts outside the project, while the project keeps up good links with SCI.

There should be no unfair differences between the LTV and other people working in the project. The volunteer should have real input in to the work s/he is doing. S/he should have a fair say in how things should be done. It also means that the volunteer should not just be doing boring routine jobs, while the paid workers do interesting jobs.

*Ö. I could help nowhere because I was not a specialist and there were very strict work plans for every group which had to be fulfilled (the fulfilling of these plans was regularly being controlled by so-called main teachers).*

*My part consisted mainly in watching and observing and not disturbing. Although my colleagues were very nice, I did not at all feel neither comfortable nor fully stretched.*

*As I really wanted not only to watch but also to work something by myself, I started looking for other possibilities to work as a volunteer. Ö*

Constanze Berendt

In some cases there can be an obvious lack of tasks or even sense of volunteer work on a certain project. In these cases, we would advise volunteers to show their own initiative and offer their own contribution where s/he sees it as useful for the project or even beyond the project. It is important to make sure that full evaluation of the current situation with the project takes place and both sides agree on changes.

*Ö like my work very much. It is very interesting for me to see how such an NGO is evolving, how the conditions for these organisations are in Russia and what work has to be done. I'm involved in everything. I don't mind doing as well administrative things. After all, I think that this work corresponds better to my interests than the work in the kindergarten. Ö*

*Constanze Berendts, volunteer in Russia  
After she started on a new project.*

On the other hand, it is important that the project is not too dependent on the volunteer. In some small living and working communities, SCI volunteers have been given too many responsible jobs because there are not enough permanent community members to do the work.

Working conditions should be safe. The volunteer should not be put into situations that s/he cannot handle and which might be dangerous. Safety guidelines should be available for volunteers, and safety instructions or training given where necessary. This is also an important point with insurance: insurance companies will not pay if the project or volunteer is at fault!

## LANGUAGE COURSES

The project should support the volunteer in arranging language courses, as learning the language might be important for integration in the project and in the local community. It might be very difficult for the volunteer to find good and cheap courses by themselves and so they rely on the support of the project.

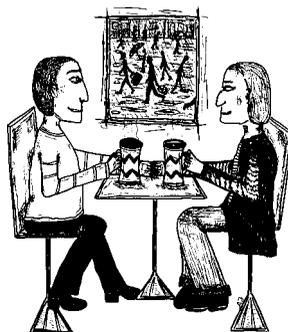
## SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEERS

Support and guidance is needed in various ways for the volunteer. When a volunteer arrives in a foreign country to work for a long period of time, s/he will have adjustment problems to their new environment.

Many things are new to the volunteer: the project (work and people), but also things like language and the social environment.

Questions like - what do things cost, where to find shops, where to meet other people, how does the public transport system work - are commonly asked by volunteers. It takes time to find answers to all these questions and it would be helpful to the volunteer if there are people who understand this and are ready to answer these questions. The volunteer needs an introduction to the practical aspects of living in a different country: closing time of shops, food habits, rules of behaviour, etc. It would be useful for branches and/or projects to make a list of such things to give to new LTVs on arrival in the project.

By living in a completely different situation you are confronted with yourself as a person. A volunteer may find it difficult to understand the people around him/her, not only their language, but also why they behave and say things in a certain way. A new environment challenges a volunteer as a person, as a representative of other cultures and traditions.



*It was a bit a surprise to me that I also got to know myself a lot better. I found qualities in myself, I didn't know about their existence. In times of difficulties, I didn't try to avoid the problems, but dealt with them. I faced my own mistakes and focused on them instead of accusing others*

*Erika Daem from VIA-Belgium, volunteer in the Soldiers' Mothers of St-Petersburg, Russia*

When the volunteer is introduced to the project there needs to be an explanation of what is being done and why. The volunteer should also get introduced to fellow-workers. Time should be allowed for the LTV to get used to his/her office or work environment, to the language, to the structure of the organisation, and have access to training where this is necessary. Training may involve learning certain computer skills or applications, language courses, communication skills, and equal opportunity rights.

Training should enable LTVs to work more effectively and feel more confident. Otherwise the volunteer may feel that they do not have the same chance to succeed or feel capable in their job. Also, by having some training the volunteer will be clearer about his/her feeling of receiving as much as s/he is giving.

There should be opportunities for the volunteer to talk about his/her overall experiences. This can be achieved through formal evaluations. The evaluation process should take place between the *work support person* and the volunteer regularly. In these evaluations, the work done in the last week(s) (including problems, results, questions) should be reflected and the work for the following week(s) planned. It is advisable to have the first evaluation between the volunteer and the hosting branch quite soon into the project in order to avoid initial problems becoming more serious problems. Around the middle of the project, the hosting organisation should conduct a mid-term evaluation to find out how things are going. It is also advisable for volunteers to have a final evaluation so that both the project and volunteer can be assessed. This can be an informal discussion, but a written report is also needed for the sending and hosting organisations and the LTV working group. This report can be published in the LTV newsletter if the volunteer agrees and later sent to volunteers who are interested to work in the same project. An **Evaluation Form for Volunteers** is included in **Appendix II**.

It is recommended that the project provides one or more persons who can act as *support person(s)*. A volunteer should have a say in who is to be his/her contact person for more personal issues.

The volunteer normally has a *contact person* in the sending organisation, but he/she also needs regular communication with a committed person

after arrival at the host project. This must be a person of trust, who is close to the volunteer's living environment. We recommend that a *mentor* be appointed by the host SCI branch/partner organisation.

The *mentor* should be familiar with the project and its activities, philosophy and staff, but not be a person who the volunteer is directly working with. In the ideal case, the *mentor* is someone who has been a LTV him/herself. His/her responsibilities include:

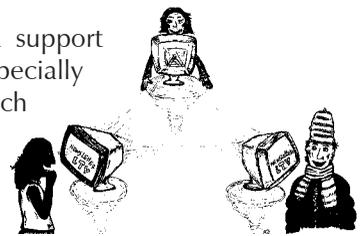
- facilitating the volunteer's integration into the organisation, project, country and new environment in general;
- being available for the volunteer and introducing the volunteer to other persons who might be helpful. The mentor should also act as the contact between the volunteer and the local community;
- assisting the volunteer with administrative formalities, should the volunteer be faced with any difficulties.

S/he is expected to familiarise the volunteer with the national health system rules and accompany the volunteer to hospital in the event of accident or illness.

The *mentor* should counsel and help the volunteer, and give him/her an opportunity to speak freely. Open communication with the volunteer in this way should prevent conflict situations. If there is a conflict situation with the hosting organisation, the *mentor* should facilitate communication between the volunteer and organisation. The mentor should be able to provide the people involved with independent monitoring and evaluation.

Besides the contact person, the volunteer also needs a support person at work. This person has to be someone who is available at the work place to answer questions about the work and provide help when needed. The *work support person* is also the person who should introduce the volunteer to his/her tasks and be present in evaluation sessions to receive direct feedback on how the project is going from the volunteer's point of view, but also to give feedback to the volunteer. It is very important that the *work support person* and *contact person* are not the same person.

It is also possible for volunteers to set up a support system among themselves. This may be especially helpful in countries where there is no SCI branch or if the branch is not involved in long term activities. This was how the **Long Term News** was created. It was meant as a place where



all volunteers can share their experience, including funny and sad moments of their service.

Some partner organisations/branches of SCI found that a solution for the "support-problem" in remote areas is to place two LTVs in the same project or at least to provide a short overlap of terms. Another suggestion is for volunteers to organise a common introductory session for the following year's LTVs. This enables information and support to be passed onto the new volunteers, and to give continuity to the project.

*Although I have to admit I felt a little overshadowed in the beginning, I think overlapping the times of service is a good idea for volunteers (two heads are better than one here, especially for organising events in the kindergarten) and a good idea for the group here at Preodoleinie. They have already seen 3 much-loved volunteers come and go and with Imke leaving (for the last time!) tomorrow, already knowing me and that I'll still be around definitely softens the blow.*

*...Another enormous benefit of having two volunteers here is each having someone to talk to about the crafts themselves. As an untrained, apprehensive but ambitious volunteer it is invaluable to have someone else in the same situation to bounce ideas off.*

*JerrieAnn from Ireland, working in Preodoleinye  
Nizhny Novgorod, Russia*

## CONTRACTS

The aim of a contract is to clarify arrangements before a volunteer starts his/her service. A written contract is an essential in preventing misconceptions by either the project, SCI branch or volunteer, and it can help to avoid or even solve problems which arise during the project. If the agreements between a branch, project and volunteer are only verbal, people may forget the original agreements or they give different interpretations to them. In the case of a serious conflict a written contract can be very useful.

A contract is not meant to be absolute. It can be changed, if all parties agree. A contract cannot be changed by only one of the parties involved. In some countries there are specific rules for volunteer contracts. If you need advice, it is best to contact a solicitor, an advice centre on voluntary work, or a law-shop (the options vary in the each country).

When a volunteer arrives at a project, a specific contract should be signed between SCI, the project partner and the volunteer. This contract should reflect the rights and duties of the particular volunteer for the advertised position. It must be agreed upon by the volunteer, project partner and SCI, and copies given to all parties involved.

The contract should include details such as:

- Length of service.
- Agreement on a trial period.
- Agreement on what will happen if any of the parties wants to terminate the co-operation before the agreed end.
- Advance notice of termination of service, from both sides, may be decided on. This includes some time arrangement, for example, you may leave or be asked to leave with one or two months notice.
- Description of the work.
- Working hours and holidays.
- Arrangement for periods of illness (what happens, for example, if a volunteer cannot work for a longer period of time).
- Accommodation, food, insurance, pocket money, travel allowance and arrangement for clothes.
- Agreement on training
- Support person(s) in the project.
- Mentor for the volunteer
- Agreement on SCI-involvement (for example, participating in SCI-events and influence of SCI branch in situations of conflict).

Optionally you can ask for a general contract that is signed between the SCI branch and the project partner, after initial contact has been made and the project partner agrees to host volunteers from SCI. This contract indicates what is expected from the project partner and future volunteers at the project.

It is advisable to have a detailed contract which requires agreements on: working conditions, accommodation and cooking facilities, first aid facilities, pocket money, insurance, illness, holidays, facilities for disabled people and volunteers with children, trial period and SCI contacts.

A template of a **SCI Contract for Volunteers** is included in **Appendix III**.

#### LEGAL POSITION OF VOLUNTEERS

The laws for staying and working are different in each country. In many countries the term 'volunteer' is an unknown legal concept. Sometimes it can be very difficult to get a visa for person working on a long-term basis as a volunteer. It is essential that the legal position of the volunteer be worked out BEFORE the volunteer arrives at the project. There have been some cases where volunteers have been forced to leave the

country because of visa problems, meaning that they cannot finish their work on the project. This can also give the project a bad reputation with the foreign police.

Initiatives from the European Union in the Unification of Europe have resulted in easier access to residential and working permits for EU citizens working as volunteers within the European Community. For nationals of countries outside the EU it is still difficult to get permits to live and work in Europe. In many cases to avoid problems it is still best to avoid using the word 'Voluntary work' in the application, since this can be interpreted too easily as 'work'. The receiving branch should have the up-to-date information on what is the best way to formulate the purpose of the stay.

The following section gives more details on obtaining visas and residential permits for volunteers. For more information, please visit web site of UNITED for Intercultural Action, the European network against nationalism, racism and fascism: <http://www.unitedagainstracism.org/>

#### LEGAL ADVICE FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers need to apply for visas at least 4 weeks in advance. For some countries you may need 7-8 weeks or even longer.

Telephone the embassy or consulate in your home country as soon as possible to find out the following details:

- opening hours of the embassy;
- how much the visa will cost;
- how long it will take to process the application;
- if you have to apply personally;
- which documents are needed (these documents must be valid).



Documents you will need include:

- application form from the embassy;
- international passport (this must be valid for at least 3 months after the expiry of visa);
- date of the visa;
- photographs (at least 2, sometimes 3 or 4);
- invitation letter from the inviting organisation;
- a guarantee declaration\* (if you go to a EU country);
- application fee;
- other documents may include medical insurance and proof of a return ticket.

EU countries are becoming more strict to non-EU people wanting to enter their countries. They want to ensure that all visitors are able to pay for their living expenses, or at least that somebody will guarantee it, and that everybody who enters also leaves the country. Some embassies will demand proof of a return ticket with a fixed date of return.

The embassy official who deals with your application decides if you will get the visa. The official may make a short interview to find out more information about you. Dress well and be polite, as first impressions are important (with government officials anyway!)

## FINANCING THE EXCHANGE OF VOLUNTEERS

The organisation of LTV exchanges costs money which can be covered by the project, volunteers and/or SCI. The normal procedure is that the hosting project covers the living expenses (food and accommodation), pocket money and the insurance costs of the volunteer. The branches usually pay for the costs of the exchange procedure. These costs include:

- making information leaflets on LTV-exchange (aims & procedures);
- spreading information on vacancies (sending out Long Term News or including vacancies in the national newsletter of the branch);
- answering enquiries of individuals who are interested in becoming a LTV, sending them information and meeting them for a personal talk on long term volunteering;

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\* A guarantee declaration for EU countries is an official letter by the hosting organisation which promises to take care of all medical and living expenses (and maybe return travel costs) and should be included with an invitation.

- interviewing applicants for LTV positions;
- supporting LTVs in their projects;
- keeping contacts with the projects in your country who have LTVs;
- additional costs, such as preparation or training events;
- keeping up the international exchange contacts within SCI.

The costs can be met by:

#### 1. The volunteers:

- pay a participation fee, which covers all the administrative costs of the exchange (comparable with the workcamp fee);
- attract a personal support group of family, friends and others, who are ready to pay their participation fee and/or travel costs;
- individual volunteers might be eligible to receive money under government employment schemes. Some administration costs may also be covered by these schemes;
- write a sponsor-letter to potential sponsors (for example, local charities and organisations) for financial support.

#### 2. The project:

- pays all the costs involved out of their own means;
- applies for special grants to cover the costs.

#### 3. The SCI branch:

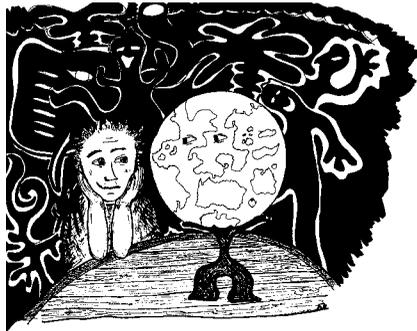
- costs are met under general overhead expenses of the branch;
- applies for special grants from funding agencies to cover the costs (e.g. Robert-Bosch-Foundation);
- individual sponsors are approached (e.g. former SCI-activists);
- national LTV working groups organises special activities to raise money;
- European funds (e.g. EVS-programme)

There are also possibilities to get an income in kind. Recycling projects, health food shops, big supermarkets and other local organisations might be willing to support the project by offering goods and services. There have also been positive experiences with asking neighbourhood centres and other organisations in offering free meeting places. Regular contact with the local community is not only financially rewarding, but also helpful in finding new projects or linking community efforts in the field of volunteering.

Funding the long term volunteer exchange by EVS has become very popular. But since it is excluding certain age groups and countries, we encourage branches and partners to look for different ways of funding. Please share your experiences with others by contacting LTEG or maybe even writing an article to Long Term News.

## RETURNING HOME

The volunteer might be well prepared to experience cultural shock when s/he arrives in a foreign country. Many of the volunteers have already been abroad on their travels and faced smaller and bigger cultural shocks that may help them to adapt to a new culture when starting their volunteer service. It is also fairly easy to find



books on cultural shock, if you want to get better prepared. It is possible to experience cultural shock also when returning back home. This is a process that one might be less prepared for. That's why we wanted to dedicate a chapter of the handbook on this process with two very different stories from volunteers on their experience of getting back home.

### **Is there a cultural shock when you return?**

What does culture really mean? Usually, we don't see a culture as a whole but as small things all around us. You might miss your favourite meal or the way of greeting. You might think of the economical or the socio-political situation. Are the customs, laws different? Do people communicate in a different way? Is the sense of humour different?

Perhaps staying in a foreign country has changed the volunteer. Little by little you have learned to live in a new culture. You have perhaps learned new ways to communicate. The volunteer may have adopted a new ideology while staying abroad. Or perhaps the situation in the home country has changed, the home town has changed. These could be little things like a new café on a street corner or huge things like a change in the political situation. It is possible that for a while you see things with 'foreign eyes' you notice things that had been invisible to you before.

Anyhow, whether it is a 'shock' or not, depends on the volunteer. How you feel and experience changing situations. Do you take changes as

a burden or as a possibility to learn new things about yourself and about your culture? And there are other, more meaningful and touching things than any *Cultural Shock*: leaving your new friends abroad (perhaps even a new girl/boyfriend) and meeting your family and old friends again back home. Do you see these relations in a new way after some time abroad? And although you may have felt home-sick when you left, you get the same kind of a feeling now once again: missing some people and some things elsewhere. If you prepare yourself mentally to the fact that you have to process certain things when you return, everything might be easier.

What can a volunteer do about it? Full of new ideas, enthusiasm or disappointment, s/he looks for people who could share the experiences. Contacting the local SCI branch or partner organisation might bring some contacts and provide the volunteer with a possibility to share and evaluate experiences with other volunteers. Sometimes becoming a mentor for someone who is just as new in your society as you used to be sometime ago can be very satisfying for both sides.

Here are some memories of the process of returning home from Adriana Pastor Granell from Spain who worked as a volunteer in Lithuania in September 2001-May 2002 and from Emily Sawyer from Great Britain who worked in Kosovo in May-December 2002.

#### GOING BACK HOME???

*The spring starts in Lithuania. After a long white and cold winter, long days, small green sticks growing everywhere, the snow disappearing, sun shining after many times without it, and life waking up after such a long sleep I felt at home. But it is time to go home I go home? Now? What does it mean? I am ready? My wish to remain more time in this wonderful country doesn't work. My mind is still in Panevezys but my body has arrived to different place. Did I forget my own language? I took the train and I couldn't realise that I was here, what I should do now?? I was conscientious that I had to take care of myself, to adapt again to my own, new culture, and go slowly I not be in hurry, and trying to enjoy my back home. Good theory, we will see in practice*

*Life was going without me, many friends were happy to see me again, but of course they were not waiting for me. Hugo, he didn't wait for me. He committed suicide when I was in Lithuania, and now after almost a year I was living his death meanwhile my friends did in the moment that he jumped and cut his life, and a part of us went with him I saw him everywhere, his voice and his blue eyes. This was my first understanding that life was going on I My friends, they had their own life, like should be work, studies, planning new projects, going abroad and nobody could help me in the process to find my place. I needed to do it alone.*

*I got the chance to go to Germany. So, without a place to live, without too much money, and without many plans on what to do in Spain, going abroad was like to prolong my experience in Lithuania.*

*But the summer finished, I realised that was not so smart and spiritually healthy to continue avoiding my going back. After more than 4 months of my return from Lithuania, then it started for me my experience called going back home. I was again in my parents' home, and I accepted my situation, I couldn't rent a flat. And, also I started to work in a bakery, a lot of hours, all Christmas time until mid January. Something to do, my brain was busy, and after work the only thing I did was taking rest.*

*Nothing changed. I felt sadness and loneliness. I would like to go back my home, to Lithuania, but nobody could understand me. I moved to Tarragona and with a lot of energy I was trying to find a new and a nice job. With my experience in the day centre for handicapped people, I thought it will be not so difficult to find a job. But this was only in my great imagination, only dreams! I had a lot of expectations and I trusted myself. Step by step, I realised this doesn't work in my country, for the bureaucracy doesn't care what experience you have, how many languages you can speak! just a normal job was waiting for me. I felt in a crisis. What did they expect from me? Many pressures from society to adapt and to integrate into the daily life! Well, it is almost a year that you are here, try to be ok!!!*

*I couldn't, I felt as an alien in my own planet. To exile again? Where? My exile was to myself and I locked my door, again.*

*A new spring started and I saw myself doing things that actually I didn't want. Crossing the ocean in a dark night without moon and without steering. So, to start again the process to find myself. I didn't want to find a stable job, and doesn't matter what my friends and my family could think about it. My sending organisation took care of me.*

*I was teaching Spanish and Catalan to new volunteers, and I felt more useful, to be involved in an international situation again, this helped me a lot.*

*I went back to Lithuania to be a camplleader in my project. It was so wonderful, not only because it was summer. Happiness again. My grandmother was getting older, so I went back home again. I decided to stay in my parents' home for a while, taking care of her, talking, reading tales to her, sharing our life and talking about what the death means, love and beauty. She died a month ago. It is sad, and sometimes I see myself crying and missing her, but it was a nice experience. I am really glad to have had the opportunity to live her process of dying. I was there, and I think she knew it. With her death I had understood that your place is everywhere and life is special because you put love in it.*

*So, what can I say more? Just live your own experience in coming back home.*

*Adriana Pastor Granell, Spain*

## BEING HAPPY TO RETURN HOME

When I first went to Kosovo I did not intend to stay for 8 months. I was intending to stay for 5 months at the most, but after 5 months I really didn't feel ready to leave. I still felt I had a lot more to learn and a lot more work to do, and I had many friends who I knew I would really miss when I left, both locals and internationals. But if I'm honest I was also delaying going back to my home London. I was worried that life back home would be trivial. Every day life for many people in Kosovo is hard, and I was concerned that I would find British people spoilt and unappreciative of their own situation in the UK. I also knew that I had changed myself, and I was worried that I would not be able to fit back in.

But I needn't have worried. I returned to London just for a few days for a job interview and I immediately felt back at home. I had emailed all my friends and told them I was coming home, and I arranged to meet lots of my friends in the pub, so I had a warm welcome. Even though I was home briefly, I really felt at home. When I returned to London permanently I was still happy to be home. I started a new job and moved to a new house, which stopped me feeling like I was returning to my old life, but instead starting a new phase of my life.

It did take time to get used to some practical things. I kept thinking about Euros (the currency used in Kosovo instead of British currency). I kept expecting the water and electricity to cut out. But gradually I got used to the differences. I really appreciated small things like being able to watch my favourite television programme, or call my friends in London without making an international call.

I do still get a shock when people in London do not realise how privileged they are, when people moan about how tough their life is. I am not saying that just because you live in London your life is easy, different people have different problems. I am also not saying that people need to go to Kosovo to realise how lucky they are. They just need to open their eyes.

Emily Sawyer, Great Britain



## REPORTS FROM VOLUNTEERS

LTEG is working on a database of reports from volunteers. To this handbook we have selected some reports that have been published in the Long Term News and we have requested some additional reports on types of projects that reports have not been published yet. From these reports you can get some idea how different the projects can be and what different experiences you can have as a Long Term Volunteer. Every volunteer and every project is different, and even the experiences of volunteers in the very same project can be far from each other. And we can learn something from all of them!

The reports are written by:

Coryse Lehembre from Belgium who worked as a placement officer in the office of SCI-France for 4 months in April ÷ July 2003.

Erika Daem from Belgium who worked for 6 months in Soldiers' Mothers of St. Petersburg, Russia in July-December 2001.

Emily Sawyer from Great Britain who worked for 8 months in Multi-Ethnic Children and Youth Peace Centres in Kosovo, May ÷ December 2002.

Sheina Bell from USA who worked for 6 months in Maple Hill Community in USA.

Diki Gyurova from Bulgaria who worked for 6 months as a Human Rights Messenger in Germany, May ÷ November 2003.

### PLACEMENT OFFICER, FRANCE

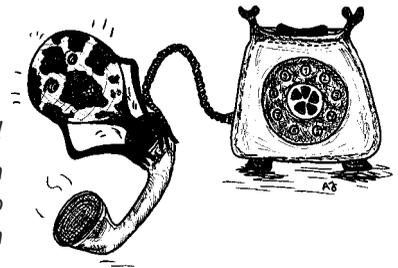
The phone is ringing in SCI-France's office

÷ *Service Civil International, bonjour!*

÷ *Hello, my name is Marie, I've send an application to take part in a work camp and I would like to know if I've been accepted in one of my choice.*

÷ *Let me see. (While I'm looking through the files, another phone is ringing, another volunteer who has to be patient and who will need to call back againÉ ). I'm sorry Marie but I can't find your application, when did you send it?*

÷ *At least five days ago!*



Ð Well, you know the French post has been on strike on and off so it's normal we haven't received it yet. Then the procedure takes some time because the decision is not up to me. When I receive your application, I will fax it to the country of your first choice; the answer has to come back within three working days but it takes usually a little bit more. If you are accepted on your first choice, we send you by post the acceptance letter and then the Info-sheet. If the camp is full or if there are already enough French speaking volunteers, I will send your application to your second choice and so on. Thus, the procedure can take one week like it can take three. But feel free to call us anytime if you want to be updated.

Another phone call

Ð Hello, I'm interested in doing a work camp with children during the last two weeks of July, in Spain or in Italy, can you tell me if there are still places left?

Ð As we are already in mid-June, many camps are full. I can find a camp during the dates that suit you but it will not be in Spain and camps with children in Italy are also full. But, if the country is more important than the theme, there are places left in environmental camps in Italy. Or you can become a boy and choose almost any camp because we don't receive enough applications from guys!

So, in summary, the work of a placement officer is to receive, all day long, phone calls from people – mostly girls and usually in their twenties – who want to have information about work camps or who would like to know which camps are still free. Then you receive their applications by post, send them by fax to the branches or partners and you receive the answer by e-mail. Isn't that boring? Well no, not at all. On paper, it looks boring, but in reality, the days never look the same because all volunteers are different and so every application is unique.

First, you start the placement season with a great training: during five days you will participate in interactive exercises and play games with volunteers with whom you will be sharing so many e-mails and faxes during the next months. So there is a face and a personality behind the placement officers' names and good memories are linked to them. (It would be even better if all placement officers could take part in this training!)

Back to the office, it's time to put in practice what you've just learned; be careful, the season starts very quickly! In 2003, the official opening

day was on May 5th: you could send applications before this date but could start accepting volunteers only starting on this date. So, on May 5th, you already have quite a few of volunteers to place! As I've already said, every day was different but the daily sentiment I was feeling stayed the same: even if I was overwhelmed with work, I wanted every volunteer to be happy. It meant that if they were not accepted in their initial choices, I was trying to find another camp that they could like as much. So, I was sometimes disappointed because some volunteers are not easy to satisfy.

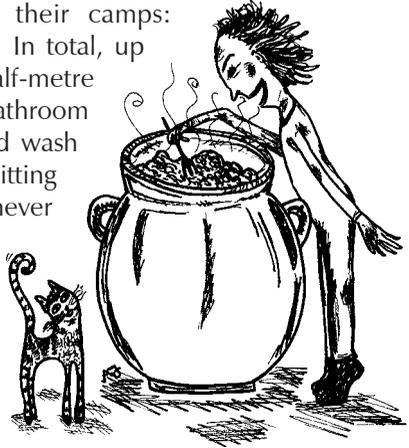
While placing the persons you have to be careful about mixing nationalities and about the girl/boy ratio. But what can you do if there are only girls applying? Simple joy of the morning: receiving an application from a boy: you can be sure that he will be accepted in one of his choices! So, you take your time in placing volunteers on a specific work camp and then, this camp is cancelled. You have ten volunteers (and two Koreans girls who already have their tickets) to place in other camps which are all almost full. Yeah!

What else, learn to share your computer with other LT volunteers, feel relieved to stay after six because the phones stop ringing at last, receive calls from parents who are worried for their children and try to convince them that SCI is not a sect or that going to Italy by train is not so difficult. And then, it's not because of a branch is continuously refusing your volunteers that you have to do the same back. Being both ingoing and outgoing officer, I was tempted to take more time to answer to the offices that I always needed to ask again about the applications of my volunteers. When you are waiting for an answer that should have came already, the time is running meaning more camps are becoming full. Also, what made it easy for me was that French was my mother tongue: try to imagine when everything is in a foreign language you don't know well!

What I missed was not being able to take part in a work camp and not staying during August in Paris to fully enjoy the summer because there is much less work. My contract with SCI France was until July 31 and also, I had to prepare my going away for another LT volunteer season: an EVS in Azerbaijan. (Another story.)

What about social life? Well, when you're a placement officer you don't have a social life because you leave the office when it is past eleven. Just kidding. In May I stayed very late quite a few times but it was because there were so many days off. When it's national holidays in your country doesn't mean that it's holiday everywhere and, just in one day, the amount of in-coming applications can be impressive.

When you are a volunteer, you have to be able to live anywhere and with anyone. I was staying in one of the most multicultural neighbourhood of Paris: mini China and mini Turkey outside the apartment and mini Europe inside. Portugal, Norway, Poland, Romania, and Lithuania: five other long-term volunteers with whom to discover Paris by night. There was one room reserved for other volunteers staying just a few nights on their way to their camps: Mexicans, Thai, Tunisians or Togolese. In total, up to 14 persons sharing a one and a half-metre square kitchen (with a mouse) and a bathroom in which you can brush your teeth and wash your feet at the same time as you are sitting on the toilet seat. Fortunately we were never this many more than one night in a row. But having so many people around always meant someone in the apartment to talk to and share experiences. (It's something else if you want to go to bed early and you hate earplugs).



Being from Bruxelles (one hour and half by train from Paris) and having old friends living in Paris, I didn't feel any cultural shock. The only thing I was not comfortable with (that I hated) was working in a hot quarter, seeing young foreign prostitutes waiting on the sidewalks and cars slowing down or stopping. Me, on one side, coming out of the office where I'm sending students to Eastern countries for holidays from, and them, looking so young, fragile and not speaking French, coming to France with a decent job in mind, and being trapped in an infernal circle.

But, keep in mind that you have to be motivated and serious about your placement work: SCI being an organisation whose biggest activity is to organise work camps, if the placement officers don't do their job well, the season can be a mess. At the same time, it means that a lot depends on the placement officer, so SCI, please, take care of your volunteers.

Coryse Lehembre, Belgium

## SOLDIERS' MOTHERS OF ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

Until now people keep on asking how I am, what I have been doing and what it was like to live in Russia. Somehow I never know what to start

with and how to tell them that this voluntary service was the most interesting and precious period in my life. I don't seem to be able to share all my feelings and thoughts with them. How do I explain that I felt immediately at home in a foreign country, that for the first time in my life it seemed to be right what I was doing? Although I have been writing long letters and e-mails about my adventures in Russia and my volunteering at the human rights organisation Soldiers Mothers of St. Petersburg I can't make them feel what I have experienced.

When I left for Russia in July 2001, I did not really realise the consequences of going abroad for such a long time. In fact, I did not understand why people kept on telling me I was so brave to do that. They wondered whether it was not too dangerous in Russia for a young girl like me. I refused to consider their fears and hung on the idea that there were also people trying to make the best out of their lives, just like in Belgium. However I graduated in Eastern European Languages and Cultures, I also could only remember the bad pictures of Russia, served by the Western media. But I was convinced to find the good sides of Russian life. It would be my first stay in Russia and I left with a clean slate. I was open to get to know a new culture, a different way of living, other people, unknown customs.

It was a bit surprise to me that I also got to know myself a lot better. I found qualities in myself, I did not know about their existence. In times of difficulties, I did not try to avoid problems, but dealt with them. I did not get angry with people when I felt maltreated. I faced my own mistakes and focused on them instead of accusing other. Of course, I have to admit that it did not happen overnight, but the first weeks, even months I gave myself time to adapt. I am happy that the members of the organisation where I was working understood my situation and were patient enough to repeat what I did not understand immediately, to take me with them wherever they were going to, to give me the time I needed.

In this way, I got to know the organisation and its activities and members very well. I examined the situation in the Russian army by talking with soldiers and their mothers, by visiting military units, courts and hospitals. From the very beginning until now, the same question appears in my mind: "How is it possible?" How is it possible that young men are killed in the barracks, how is it possible that unhealthy boys have to serve in the army, how is it possible that so many people know about the dreadful situation and do not do anything about it? I feel so privileged I got to know those women in the Soldiers Mothers of St. Petersburg.

who believe in a change, a better future and who actually do something about the problems in the Russian army and society.

I also had the opportunity to get to know other organisations, not only in St. Petersburg, but also in other cities like Novgorod, Moscow and Pskov. And I found out that for every problem there is a strong person who is convinced it is not too late for Russia. If Western Europe only talks about the problems Russia is coping with, I know now that they are working on solutions. And although I realise that Russia has a long way to go, I believe that those people can make the difference.

In the letters to family and friends, I wrote about the lessons in human rights in the villages in the North, about how we exhumed a murdered soldier to prove that he did not commit suicide like the army alleges, about desperate mothers attending the organisation and finding the strength there to fight for their rights. Reading in their answers that they admired my courage, I felt strange because it did not feel right that they admired me. For ten years now, the co-chairwomen and the other members of the organisation are fighting for the rights of recruits and soldiers. They try to change the post-communist consciousness of Russian people, protest against the war in Chechenya and want to demilitarise the Russian society. They really devote their lives to saving boys and helping them not to serve in the army in a legal way. I was only helping them for six months. I do not see why friends and family should admire me. I feel so little next to those incredible women and I expressed to them my wish to be able to build a life as valuable as theirs. And if I succeed in that, it will be thanks to the great opportunity of living like a volunteer in Russia.

Erika Daem, Belgium

Getting to know Russia and myself | LT News 1/2002

## MULTI-ETHNIC CHILDREN AND YOUTH PEACE CENTRES, KOSOVO

I was a long term volunteer in Mitrovica, Kosovo for 8 months in 2002. I volunteered with a project called Multi-ethnic Children and Youth Peace Centres (MCYPC), which was run by local and international volunteers and local staff. As an international volunteer I had many different responsibilities. I worked with the coordinator writing project proposals and fundraising, and also working on projects. MCYPC is based in a Mitrovica, a divided town with Serbs mainly living in the north part of the town, and Albanians in the south.

Some people I met in Kosovo were shocked that I was working as a volunteer without a salary, and genuinely didn't understand why I would move from London to Mitrovica/e to volunteer. However I met many other people who admired and respected what I did, and I met many other people who had volunteered themselves, or who were also volunteers at the time. In fact there were many other SCI volunteers in Kosovo while I was there, with Balkan Sunflowers and SCI Switzerland. I often met up with other volunteers which gave us a chance to share experiences and also have some fun!

I learnt a lot about myself during my 8 months as a volunteer. Although it may sound strange, one of the things I was most worried about was sharing a room as I was used to having my own room. But I shared a room with 1 or 2 other volunteers while I was there, and it was not as difficult as I thought. There were lots of other things I discovered I could do, which I did not think I could. For example, the water and the electricity were very limited, but I found ways to work round that. And that also taught me appreciate them when they were there. Now I am back in London, I never stop being grateful that I can have a hot shower whenever I want!

Other than the obvious, there were many factors that make volunteering in this kind of situation different from working. Being a volunteer earned me a lot of respect from many local people, who admired that fact that I was working in Mitrovica/e because I really cared about what I was doing, and I wasn't there just to earn money. Also, our organisation was really part of the community that we lived in. We didn't just do our job and go home in the evening and switch off from it. I also had the opportunity to learn many new skills and learn about all aspect of running an NGO.

I was quite nervous about returning to London. I had become so used to a different way of life, and I was worried that I would not be able to fit back in. But in fact coming home was easier than I thought. But I will never forget what I learnt in Kosovo. I am glad I spent 8 months as a volunteer. I learnt many new skills, learnt a lot about the situation in Kosovo and learn a lot about myself.

Emily Sawyer, Great Britain

## MAPLE HILL COMMUNITY, USA

Maple Hill is set in lovely woodlands with a house and barn located towards the bottom of the 22 acres of land. If you like the great outdoors then this is the place for you.

It is a small life sharing project functions as an extended family. Here are no clients or staff whether the diagnosis is mental illness, brain injury or development delay, every member of the community contributes to what they can do or can be, and are appreciated and respected for their individuality. Much of the philosophy is from Rudolf Steiner who provided the impulse for a worldwide network of social and therapeutic communities. Camphill Communities and Wardorf schools are examples of this. At this small project they try to balance the interdependence fostered by community life with each person's individual needs and wishes.

The success of the project is due to the way the work, learning, recreation and symptom management all interacted. Each activity serves as an opportunity for everyone to learn, grow and heal be it daily chores, a visit to the Boston Symphony, a trip to the coast or taking part in the special Olympics, and you will be part of the process.

The days start very early at about 5.30 and breakfast is an hour later when all are up and around, some with help. From then on it is a stop, start, stop, start day. Besides the daily chores and the care of the animals, the normal feeding, washing and cleaning activities, there is a schedule of activities that is re-assessed continually to ensure that everybody is occupied with one activity or another, most of the time.

All this has to be re-shuffled to fit in major events like the Olympics and Maple Sugaring (results in very long arms and in ability to scratch the inside of one's ankles without bending. You need 50-60 gallons to produce one gallon of syrup which is a lot of carrying from the woods.) The Summer Riding Program, Apple picking and Cider pressing come later in the year.

Being here in the winter meant that I was involved in the Winter Special Olympics. That was an enlightening experience, despite being exhausted from the physicality of the three days I spent most of my time laughing till I cried. Or with a permanent lump in my throat with the wonderful sense of achievement we all had.

Anyone coming here should have no illusions about the hard work that the day to day entails, and they should also think very carefully about having to live in very close proximity with people who do not fit the average thinking patterns, who have little communication skills as is normally recognised, and any volunteer would need to commit for at least 6 months or a year. Living a communal lifestyle can result in little privacy and shared everything but also gives a feeling of belonging and

a front row seat in seeing people achieve. Many of the social and cultural activities and visits are as part of the wider family group. You need an ability to think on your feet at the same time as being aware of the needs of everyone in the household to assess the possible impact before making any decisions. That is a bit like juggling soot!

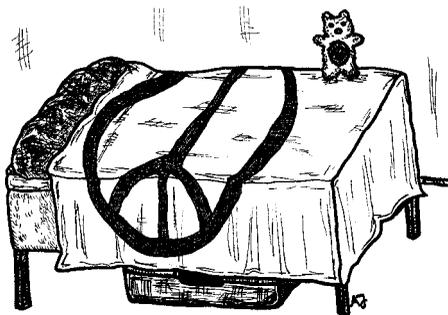
To anyone of a like mind I would recommend taking up an experience like this, it can be hard work, it can be isolating, but it is also a very special time for it enriches and confirms who you are.

Sheina Bell,  
LT News 1/2003

## HUMAN RIGHTS MESSENGER, GERMANY

ÓThe best summer I have ever hadÓ

My experience as a LTV volunteer? It is so difficult to summarise it now or to take a look backÉ ItÓ even less than two weeks since I came back home and in a way I am still not awake from what was my Human Rights Messengers (HRMs) Project summer.



I am Dilyana, a social worker from Bulgaria, who spent 6 months at SCI-Germany together with my colleague Akbar from Azerbaijan. We were two out of 16 other volunteers from 14 different countries spending 6 months working for SCI branches or partner organisations in other countries under the coordination of GATE (the East-West Working Group of SCI). We were visiting workcamps in our hosting countries and leading workshops on Human Rights (HR) issues for the volunteers, we were researching about HR cases and general situations, attending different seminars, working on a publication called ÓHuman Rights Message Ð learn, train & experienceÓand the last but not the least Ðlearning a lot about ourselves and having fun!

Our LTV period began in Croatia, where we had the preparation trainings for the project Ð on voluntarism, SCI, HR and non-formal education combined with lots of parties and sharing of experiences. These 2 weeks loaded everybody with lots of enthusiasm and so we went to our hosting countries to explore Human Rights!

There both Akbar and me had a one-month-internship at different HR organisations in Germany, then we joined the other HRMs for a mid-term evaluation meeting and a Conflict Resolution training. We prepared some workshops about different HR issues, we participated in a Travelling Workcamp, during and after which we visited several workcamps and led there our workshops, we had a Project Management training, worked at the HRM Publication, prepared a HR exhibition for school pupils, visited several HR organisations, wrote a pile of reports...

For me this was the first experience of this kind and I spent the whole time with my eyes wide open because I was afraid I was going to miss something interesting. So, I really did enjoy every single part of it and never regretted joining this project. Of course there were some difficult moments and some muttering from time to time, but is it possible to be fully satisfied? Anyway, now I appreciate that the worst moments have helped me a lot to learn or realise some things about myself. Because it is not only the project contents that you learn. In my case that was a lot about Human Rights, methodology of running non-formal workshops, communication skills and precious experience with international groups etc. But there is still a lot beyond. You learn about another country and culture; how to be independent and self confident, even if you sometimes feel rather helpless and weak; about team work; time and resources management etc. It is a whole new world you adjust to and it is always challenging.

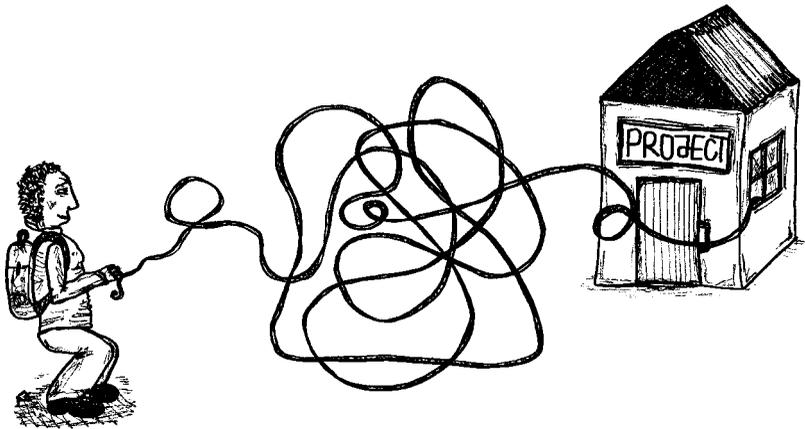
In my case I was expecting something more formal. The organisation itself as working relationships between the people and attitude towards me but also the work. It was due to the common stereotypes about the hardworking, organised and devoted German people. So I was nicely surprised with the relaxed atmosphere at the office and the freedom I was given in my work. Sometimes I even felt too relaxed, can you believe it?

At the beginning I was also having some concerns about my future cooperation with my colleague. Is it easy to build a team with a completely unknown person? And all these "what if"s? Thanks God, my fears were not met! Akbar turned out to be so nice and normal, that it was a pleasure working, laughing, travelling, cooking (yummmmy!), hanging around and even arguing with him! It was really good to have someone in the same situation as you, especially in the moments of disappointment, when the personal support is so important. Knowing him

gave me also the chance to get to know his country a bit better, unfortunately our schedules were really busy, so my Azeri knowledge is limited to "Hi" and "Goodbye".

What else? It is not easy to put a six-months-experience in words, there are always so many different things coming to my mind. It was such a great time, even if I had some complaints regarding the organisational side and the personal support. I was working hard and travelling a lot, met great people & good colleagues and friends and also one very special person to me, so I will never forget my lovely Human Rights Messengers summer of 2003!

Diki Gyurova, Bulgaria



## APPENDIX I

SCI SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL

The Association of Service Civil International  
 In Europe ivzw (International Secretariat)  
 St-Jacobsmarkt 82, 2000 Antwerpen, Belgium  
 tel: 32.3.2265727, fax: 32.3.2320344  
 finances@sciint.org €www.sciint.org

## INSURANCE INFOSHEET FOR VOLUNTEERS VERSION 2003

**Introduction**

Service Civil International has a policy with a Swiss-based insurance company to provide complementary insurance cover for its volunteers on workcamps. This paper summarises the procedures and coverage of the insurance for workcamp volunteers. It is for guidance purposes only and forms no part of a contract between SCI, its insurers or its volunteers. The **Guidelines for Insurance 2002** may be referred to for further information and clarification on the coverage and administration of the scheme (obtainable from your local branch). Questions about any aspect of the insurance scheme should be addressed, in the first instance, to your local branch.

**Overview**

SCI Insurance is designed to cover those items that are not covered under private or state insurance schemes. Volunteers should be aware of this complementary character and wherever possible, ensure that they have adequate insurance cover under a commercial or state scheme. The coverage is for medical costs in case of accident or illness while on the workcamp. It does not cover the period of time volunteers are travelling to and from workcamps or loss or damage to personal belongings. Further details of coverage are printed overleaf. Volunteers should also be aware that SCI is not an assistance company! In case of accident, illness, injury or other difficulty, the local branch/host organisation is responsible for ensuring that volunteers receive the medical or other help required.

**Who is insured under the SCI insurance scheme?**

All volunteers on SCI workcamps in Europe, USA, Australia, Japan and Korea and all SCI volunteers on workcamps of the official partner organisations of SCI in Europe, Turkey, Palestine, the Maghreb countries, North America and Japan. Volunteers on SIW and MS workcamps are not insured under the SCI Insurance but under a comparable Insurance Scheme. SCI Medium or Long Term Volunteers (M/LTV) or SCI volunteers on workcamps of other partner organisations or on those in Asia, Africa or Latin America can be covered. Please contact your branch for more information.

### **What should I do before going to a workcamp?**

Check the coverage of your health/ travel insurance and any other insurance that might apply and take the relevant documentation with you to the workcamp.

Take any necessary precautions (e.g. vaccination), particularly if travelling from a temperate to a tropical zone, taking advice from your doctor/medical centre some weeks prior to travelling, where appropriate.

In addition, if you are going to a workcamp that is not being run by an SCI branch, you should take the SCI Insurance Notification Form with you, available from your sending branch. On SCI workcamps, this form should be available from the co-ordinator.

### **What do I do in case of an accident or illness requiring medical attention?**

The SCI Insurance Notification Form should be filled in by the doctor in charge in case of any medical examination, and should be sent to SCI Insurance (address at the top of this sheet) within 48 hours of the accident or onset of the illness. The front page can be filled in by the workcamp co-ordinator or by you. Check whether the questions are answered in an understandable way, and provide a translation in English, French, German or Dutch. If this delays sending the form, you can send the translation later. In cases of damage or injury to a third party (see **Third party responsibility** under **Coverage**), obtain a copy of all official reports of the incident (police reports etc.), and send these to SCI Insurance. Write the name of the person concerned (the third party) on each document. In some cases, it will be necessary to record the names of witnesses. Your workcamp coordinator should assist you with this. Always inform your sending organisation as well.

If you are covered under a private or state health scheme you must also take the necessary steps to ensure that any claim for medical or other costs is made to this scheme in the first instance. SCI insurance will only meet the costs of claims not met by such private or state health schemes.

In serious cases (hospitalisation, emergency repatriation etc.) the Insurance Administration must be notified within 24 hours (by telephone, fax, email or telegram). This is the responsibility of the Workcamp Co-ordinator or host branch. Emergency phone numbers (see next page)

### **Emergency phone numbers are:**

SCI International Secretariat: 32.3.226.57.27 Fax: 32.3.232.03.44

Nico Verzijden (home) : 31.10.432.63.80

Willy Dries (home) : 32.3.232.36.36

## COVERAGE (ALL AMOUNTS IN EURO)

### Coverage for accidents

- full cost for doctors, medicines and hospitalisation (for a maximum period of 10 years after the accident)
- up to a maximum of 111,000 Euro for total or partial disability (depending on the extent of disability)
- up to a maximum of 12,500 Euro for death, plus 3,000 Euro in case of 1 dependent child (up to and including 18 years of age) or 6,000 Euro in case of more dependent children.
- all cost for repatriation in case of medical necessity

### Coverage for illness

- up to a maximum of 9,400 Euro for doctors, medicines and hospitalisation up to 1 year for the same case
- up to a maximum of 3,100 Euro for repatriation in case of medical necessity Third party responsibility is the responsibility of the workcamp organisation towards its volunteers and all other persons, as far as workcamps or other placement of volunteers are concerned and/or the responsibility of the volunteers towards all other persons except the workcamp organisation and other volunteers.
- Up to a maximum of 3,720,000 Euro for an injured or killed person, several injured or killed people in the same accident, or material damage

### Limitations to coverage

- only people between (and including) 16 and 65 years of age can be covered.
- people are not insured for illness or accidents arising from special physical or mental conditions (e.g. epilepsy, physical handicap, chronic illness) existing prior to the period of insurance. People who fall into this category should seek advice on alternative insurance arrangements.
- pregnancy: claims for medical expenses related to pregnancy will be considered for the period of the first five months of the pregnancy only.
- costs resulting from exhaustion or nervous and psychiatric disorders are excluded from the illness coverage.
- coverage does not extend to temporary loss of earnings due to accident or illness.
- accidents or injury arising from civil disturbances, war etc. are not ordinarily covered.

- travel from home to the project and back is not ordinarily covered.
- the Insurance Commission reserves the right to reject the claim if there is evidence of an accident arising as a result of negligence or during the course of an illegal activity (e.g. whilst using a vehicle with inadequate insurance coverage). Also claims arising from accidents or illnesses related to the abuse of drugs, alcohol or other narcotic substances will not be met by the scheme.
- dental help: costs are only covered if they result from an accident.
- spectacles: costs are only covered if they result from an accident, up to 200 Euro.
- doctors in charge: costs for medical treatment are only covered if the doctor in charge is officially registered with the medical authorities in the country concerned.
- private clinics: public medical facilities should be used whenever possible. Treatment in private clinics will only be compensated for if there is no reasonable alternative available.
- transport costs: costs of emergency transport resulting from accidents or illnesses are covered completely (subject to the limits mentioned above), but the reimbursement of other transport costs resulting from accidents or illnesses is limited to the cost of public transport.
- third party responsibility: material damage is not covered when caused by volunteers to other volunteers or people belonging to the branch or organisation or when caused to goods that were given to the workcamp for temporary use e.g. cars, tools, bikes, furniture.
- Theft of goods that were given for temporary use is not covered. However, in such case, the Insurance

**Commission can decide to make ex-gratia payments.**

- Claims arising from the cancellation of projects are not covered.
- claims arising from accidents while undertaking high risk leisure activities (such as paragliding, canoeing, skiing, diving) will not generally be covered. Claims will only be considered where participants have received professional training and are properly supervised
- Important: coverage only extends to the direct costs of medical assistance which results from illnesses contracted or accidents that took place DURING the project (and not e.g. during the travel or when you are staying longer). Moreover, the insurance provides compensation for death occurring only in case of **ACCIDENTS**.

**APPENDIX II****SCI** SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL**EVALUATION FORM FOR LONG TERM VOLUNTEER****Your name** .....**Period of work** .....**Project** .....**Sending organisation** ..... **Receiving organisation** .....

Dear volunteer,

You have just finished a period of time working as a Long Term Volunteer, and we would like to know how that experience was. We can learn from your input. You might want to give us advice about how to support LTVs better or things that need to be discussed with the organisation you worked for before we consider advertising the same position for next LTV. Your stories can be used to prepare future LTVs for the same or a similar position. Give us your thoughts and ideas; we'd be grateful.

Please write a report answering the following questions and stressing on the aspects of the exchange that were most important for you. It should be returned to your sending and hosting organisation and to LTEG (lteg@sciint.org).

1. How did you find out about the availability of the position?
2. Did you receive enough information about the position before you started? From whom?
3. Tell us about the organisation you worked for, the work they do, their ideology, their decision making structure?
4. Did the project work for peace? How?
5. Did you make an agreement beforehand on the terms of volunteering and was it implemented? Did you make the agreement with the hosting project and/or with the receiving organisation?
6. What were your responsibilities in the organisation?
7. How did you fit in as a volunteer? Were you involved in the decision-making processes? Did you have your own responsibilities or were you mostly told what to do?
8. How was your accommodation and food arranged? Was it adequate?

9. How much pocket money did you receive? Was it sufficient?
10. Tell us a bit about your social life while being an LTV?
11. Did you have a person in the project you could turn to with questions or worries (work support person)? Was the work support person motivated?
12. What kind of support did you get from the receiving organisation? Did you have a mentor, and was s/he motivated?
13. Did the reality match the background information and your own expectations?
14. Do you think this project should be supported by SCI by way of sending volunteers? Why?
15. Should the same LTV position be repeated? With what changes?
16. Do you plan to stay involved with SCI? how?
17. What do you want to do with your experiences, how will they influence your future life?

Can we give your name and address to future potential volunteers for questions?

Can we show this questionnaire to future volunteers/hosting project/receiving organisation/sending organisation?

Can we publish your report in the Long Term Newsletter/ the Internet?

Your address .....

Telephone .....

E-mail .....

Anything else you want to tell/suggest us? Long Term News would be very happy to receive an article describing your experiences. Would you write one?

**Please send your report back to the sending and hosting organisations and to LTEG (lteg@sciint.org)**

Thank you!

## APPENDIX III

SCI SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL

## SCI CONTRACT FOR VOLUNTEERS

**Long term volunteer:**.....  
**Organisation :**.....  
**Branch of Service Civil International (SCI):**.....  
We hereby confirm that .....  
will work as an SCI-volunteer at .....  
from ..... to ..........  
This period starts with a ..... month trial period.**Working hours:** .....**Holidays:** .....**Work description:** ..........  
**Pocket money:** .....**Food:** .....**Accommodation:** .....**Insurance:** ..... will be insured in the SCI-insurance scheme,  
which covers accidents and sudden illnesses during both working and leisure time.

**In the case of illness** it is agreed that .....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Termination of this contract:**

In the case that any of the parties of this contract wants to terminate the co-operation before the agreed end the party concerned must tell this to other parties of this contract two weeks before the finishing day.

**The LTV can take part in activities of the branch in the following way:**

.....  
.....  
.....

Volunteer **support person** on the behalf of the branch is: .....

Volunteer **support person** on the behalf of ..... is

.....  
.....

The LTV working group of the branch and .....

and ..... will make sure that this contract is duly enforced and will provide to help to solve problems arising during the period of voluntary service.

**Date:**

.....

**Signatures:**

.....



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European Commission



## SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL GATE

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Kraśińskiego 3A/1, 60-830 Poznań,  
tel. +48 (61) 848 43 36, fax +48 (61) 848 43 37, Poznań  
e-mail: [scigate@mail.icpnet.pl](mailto:scigate@mail.icpnet.pl), <http://www.sciint.org/gate>