



PROVOBIS

CENTRUL NAȚIONAL DE RESURSE PENTRU VOLUNTARIAT

ANNUAL REPORT

2013

OUR WORK WITH promoting volunteerism to companies

Give & Gain Day Romania 2013	Marketplace For companies	Corporate volunteering action days	EVEN - The Employee Volunteering European Network	Services for companies
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Following the invitation launched by BITC UK at the end of 2012 to engage in their international event Give & Gain Day, in April 2013 we launched **Give & Gain Day Romania** as the Corporate Volunteering Day (on May 17th). On May 17th, in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, 6 employees of MDM Group along with 4 international volunteers and 2 local volunteers cooked a 3 course meal for over 70 homeless persons living in a residential center of Prison Fellowship Romania. The activity was organized by Pro Vobis – National resource Center for Volunteering in collaboration with Cluj-Napoca Volunteer Center. The company contributed with employee volunteers, as well as a donor, by purchasing food, kitchen utensils, cleaning materials, etc. On the same day, in Bucharest, 26 employees from a large pharmaceutical company planted flowers in front of the 12 children’s homes (68 beneficiaries) and painted a cabin used for summer activities, in a children’s village, in partnership with SOS Satele Copiilor Romania (SOS Children’s Villages). In order to make our services more attractive to companies, we decided to invest in making a short movie for each of the 2 action days we organized. At the same time, we encouraged VIOs involved in the National Volunteer Week (NVW) to mobilize local companies in their own communities on May 17th 2013. Six NVW partners responded to our call (CENTRAS Constanta, Inclusive Education School Center Negresti, "Medias for Culture" Association, Medias, Caritas Satu-Mare, Municipality of Medgidia, "Gheorghe Manu" School Budesti) and involved 87 corporate volunteers in their activities. In total, our efforts towards Give & Gain Day 2013 enabled 8 community projects, of which 2 in Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca (events organized by Pro Vobis), plus 6 other towns in Romania (events organized by 6 VIOs), with over 138 beneficiaries and a total of 119 corporate volunteers involved. We will continue to grow this event in 2014 - Give & Gain Day 2014 in Romania is set to May 16th.

In May 2013, during the National Volunteering Week, Pro Vobis and the Bucharest Community Foundation organized a **marketplace for companies** and local NGOs. It was an opportunity to bring together the 2 sides involved or wishing the get involved in volunteering action days, to share experiences, worries and success stories. Before the event we ran a brief online survey among the participants regarding difficulties, successes, opportunities and needs from both sides – NGOs and companies wishing to collaborate – which served as a basis for the workshop, as well as for our work with companies during the year. The companies Holcim, Petrom and Mega Image were present, along with 8 NGOs.

In April 2013, Selgros Cluj contacted us for supporting their annual **corporate volunteering day**, which was going to take place on April 18th. After discussing with the PR team and evaluating the needs of the company, we decided to support them organize the volunteer teams and add nonformal teambuilding elements to the event with the help of a volunteer. A filming crew was also present and captured the action day, which consisted of a cleaning the sides of a large road in the area of the Selgros store, on a 3 km long distance, with the help of 40 employees from all

departments and levels, as well as 30 pupils from the Ștefan Pascu" Apahida Technical Highschool. Over 100 bags of litter which filled 3 large trucks were gathered. The event was promoted by Pro Vobis and the short movie was used to showcase our portfolio of services for companies.

In 2013, Pro Vobis developed its **services** for companies, consisting of organizing action days, evaluation of employee interests, training, consultancy, teambuilding activities, matching, resources and presentations and commissioned 3 short movies depicting corporate volunteering action days that we organized or took part in and which can also be found on our web page.

We became members of a new European network initiated by CEV called **The Employee Volunteering European Network (EVEN)** (<http://www.cev.be/training-capacity-building/even/>). The objectives of the newly-formed network are to increase the number of corporate volunteering collaborations with VIOs, offer recognition, share experiences and increase competencies among members.



OUR WORK WITH volunteer-involving organisations

National Volunteering Week 2013	Volunteer Portraits 2013	Consultancy	Training	Volunteque 3.0
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In May 2013, we organized the twelfth edition of the **National Volunteering Week**, under the slogan “Volunteering brings us together”. Over 170 VIOs from 110 locations got affiliated with the NVW in 2013 as partners, in 37 counties and the capital, and mobilized over 12 000 volunteers. Over 600 other NGOs and institutions collaborated locally with the NVW partners. The event generated over 200 press articles in the entire country (although almost exclusively in local and regional mass-media). Pro Vobis supported 100 of the NVW partners with branded T-shirts. Promotional materials were also made available on the website in the form of posters, flyers and a press release template.

At the end of 2013 we continued the tradition of putting together **volunteer portraits** nominated by VIOs around the country, in collaboration with the National Volunteer Gala organized by VOLUM Federation, of which we are a founding member. A number of 48 volunteer portraits were shortlisted from the almost 200 nominations, from fields like social/environment/cultural/youth/senior/etc volunteering, and including a section dedicated to corporate volunteering. The 48 volunteer portraits were accompanied by 5 volunteer coordinator portraits. In order to exploit social media, we published the Portraits individually in a dedicated Facebook album on our social media page.

During 2013, a number of 4 organizations from Lugoj, Ploiesti, Ilfov and a village from Republic of Moldova expressed initial interest for developing a **volunteer center** and sent us inquiries. Pro Vobis supported them with clarifications on the concept and their working plans and provided them access to the comprehensive “Guide to Setting up a Volunteer Center”, the revised edition of the 2003 initial publication, gathering Pro Vobis’s 10 year of experiences and lessons learned in promoting and supporting the development of volunteer centers in Romania.

Along with creating a services offer for companies, we also developed **services for VIO**, based on needs we identified along recent years and various consultations: training for volunteers, training for volunteer coordinators, training for setting up volunteer centers, consultancy related to volunteer management issues but also organizational development, facilitation, resources, networking opportunities. The offer is displayed on our website.

One on-demand **training** sessions for 2 VIOs was delivered in 2013. In November, in Targu Mures, 24 volunteers from the organization “Impreuna pentru copiii cu cancer” (Together for children with cancer), were trained for 2 days by 2 of our trainers. The topics covered were team work, individual and group motivation, the volunteerism movement in Romania, rights and responsibilities of volunteers, intercultural issues etc. Another training session, for the organization “Autism Transylvania” is scheduled to be delivered in 2014 in Baia Mare.

A number of 26 VIOs have been **trained** (representatives of each organization participated in a 2 days training offered by Pro Vobis) and capacitated, in one of our projects, to organize a local event to promote volunteering in their community. The event, called the EVS Caravan, took place in 26 locations, small and large, around the country, and promoted volunteerism to a total of 360 other VIOs which took part in the local events. Over 50 VIOs (represented through staff and volunteers) took part in a large event dedicated to volunteering, called **Volunteque 3.0**, which we organized together with other partners. The program was organized in open-space style and a total of 42 workshops took place on topics such as volunteer management systems, sharing of personal volunteering experiences, tools and methods for promotion of volunteering etc. Two external consultants provided valuable input to VIOs on themes like fundraising and impact assessment.

Ten organizations with little experience on volunteering programs and especially working with EVS (European Voluntary Service) international volunteers have received, through the same project, professional **mentoring and assistance** from 5 professionals with a lot of experience in the field. During the mentoring process each mentored organization has participated in a Job Shadowing at the organization of their mentor. Two webinars were organized at the end of 2013 and held by Pro Vobis on “The selection of volunteers in EVS” and “The learning process in EVS”, in which participated 44 representatives of organizations from all over the country. The recorded **webinars** have been posted on the Youtube page of Pro Vobis and reached a target of 150 views until January 2014. In the same project, Pro Vobis developed 4 video instruments regarding themes on Volunteer Management, with the expertise of professionals from the field. The movies contain experiences of professionals, tips & tricks about volunteer management, learning process in EVS, sending of volunteers and are available on our website and on our Youtube channel.

At the end of 2013 we reviewed the activities and potential represented by the **Bucharest Volunteer Center (BVC)** as a resource for local VIOs in the capital. Because Pro Vobis cannot offer enough context for growth of CVB, a decision was taken in December 2013 to pass on the legacy of CVB to Young Initiative Association and offer the consultancy and resources needed to grow the center further.



OUR WORK WITH practitioners in the field of volunteering

Volunteer Coordinators' Club	SEVex community	Training and e-training	Webinars	EU Aid Volunteers
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The **Volunteer Coordinators' Club (VCC)** is an initiative of Pro Vobis to build a community of practitioners in volunteer management. During 2013 there were organized 3 meetings of VCC in Bucharest. The meeting from January was focused on the implementation procedures of the certificate of evaluation and recognition of competencies gained through volunteering experience developed during 2011 the European Year of Volunteering. On the 5th of October 17 coordinators tested the courses based on the e-learning platform developed in our project REVEAL. The workshop also addressed issues like: being more efficient in working with volunteers and how to communicate the volunteering projects. On the 5th of November the VCC community celebrated the International Volunteers Managers' Day. This celebration workshop had the aim of creating a toolbox for volunteer coordinators, including tools for and ideas on how to improve their efficiency and their results.

A number of 187 practitioners from Romania (including volunteers in coordinating positions or wishing to take up coordination) graduated at least a course on an **e-learning platform** developed within a large European project we were partners in, and 85 people used the online tool for testing their knowledge. The courses, organized each in a basic, intermediate and an advanced level, focused on project management, financial management, communication, human resources and volunteer management (module developed by Pro Vobis). The competencies covered by these modules were jointly identified as being in high demand in the volunteering sector. The module dedicated to Volunteer Management was accessed by Romanian practitioners a number of 385 times for the advanced level, 342 times for intermediary level and 575 times for the basic level: <http://www.revealvolunteering.eu/courses.php#HR> The courses were developed as part of REVEAL (Raising Effectiveness of Volunteering in Europe through Adult Learning) international project with partners from 6 countries, its main product being the web based platform www.revealvolunteering.eu. This resource was also used for the development of the Volunteer Coordinators' Club.

Pro Vobis has **trained** 23 returned international volunteers (EVS) to become the active founding members of SEVex community, which has the role to promote volunteering at the national level, to be a resource for new volunteers who return from their international placements (and search opportunities to stay socially active and get involved in their community) and most importantly to act like a matching platform to put in contact volunteers with the local communities (public institutions, NGO's, etc.) in order to develop activities together. Pro Vobis has supported the SEVex Community not only through the training and continuous support in organizational matters, but also has created an online platform to serve its purpose. The community members got involved in a number of activities, nationally and at the local level, such as Nonformal Education Day (ZEN

Day), Volunteque, Caravana SEV. ZEN Day (Nonformal Education Day) consisted of organizing 5 events in 5 main cities of the country, reaching about 200 participants who learned about volunteering through public cafes, sharing of experiences, treasure-hunt and other non-formal activities.

Two **webinars** on the topic of learning through volunteering and the process of selecting volunteers, respectively, specifically in the European Voluntary Service context, were implemented by Pro Vobis staff in December 2013. The webinars were presentations addressed to practitioners in the field of volunteering and 44 representatives of NGOs and institutions working or wishing to work with volunteers attended our webinars.

A number of 50 practitioners in the field of volunteering (coordinators, trainers, mentors, volunteers wishing to become mentors) took part in 2 **workshops** that were organized by ART Fusion within our project “gONG: Volunteering takes the stage!” in 2013. The topics covered were “Mentoring and the learning process” (Nov. 2013, Busteni) and “Intercultural aspect and conflict management” (July 2013, Busteni).

One particular way of supporting the development of skilled volunteer management practitioners is related to volunteerism for international development. The European Commission, through DG ECHO, is currently working to put together the **EU Aid Volunteers** Initiative and has been funding several pilot projects aimed at testing various practical ways in which this initiative can be further implemented. Pro Vobis is involved in one pilot project started August 2013, being in responsible for the component of local capacity building in the countries where EU Aid Volunteers will be deployed. Pro Vobis is thus delivering training on local volunteer management for the outgoing volunteers in order to capacitate them to involve local volunteers in their activity hosted by local organizations and transfer their knowledge on local volunteer management to the local organizations. During the current pilot 12 international expert volunteers will be trained (5 were trained in November 2013) and 7 will be trained in February 2014.



OUR WORK WITH public institutions

National Volunteering Week	“gONG: Volunteering takes the stage!”	Advocacy and lobby	Services for public institutions
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The **National Volunteering Week** (NVW) has been, in the past couple of years, a great opportunity to mobilize public institutions in order to show their support, for volunteerism through action. The event seems to have become more attractive to public institutions which increasingly join local VIOs in developing community project during the week or even design and implement their own community projects. Some of the activities carried out by schools, kindergartens, public libraries and municipalities were cleaning of public spaces, promoting reading, award galas, addressing social issues, etc. A number of 87 schools and kindergartens organized volunteering activities in the NVW. Also, three of the National Volunteer Week partners that responded to our call to action to involve companies and employee volunteers on Give & Gain Day 2013 (within the NVW) were institutions: 2 schools and one municipality.

Our series of events **Caravana SEV**, in the project “gONG: Volunteering takes the stage!”, gathered between 10 and 15 participants in each of the 26 locations around the country, of which a small but significant proportion were representatives of public institutions (schools, Local Council, Youth Department). The events promoted the development of international and local volunteering programs and the sending of Romanian volunteers abroad.

In 2013 we continued working with the **Ministry of Labor** by participating at their invitation to 2 meetings to the working group on “Employment” in order to develop a strategy for new European funds taking into account the great benefits volunteering can have for increasing the employability among young people and not only. This working group gave us the chance to meet other institutions interested in capitalization of experience in volunteering that could help unemployed people to develop competencies, other than the formal education experience they already have. Pro Vobis also continued its lobby efforts, as part of the VOLUM Federation, for a renewed Law of Volunteering.

Pro Vobis continued working with **ANPCDEFP** (The National Agency for European Programs on Education and Professional Training) in joining efforts for promoting volunteering. Through our project “gONG: Volunteering takes the stage!” – the 4th EVS-support project financed by the ANPCDEFP agency, involved 306 NGOs in the country for increasing the quality of projects in European Volunteering Service and volunteering in general.

Our set of **services** specifically addressed to public institutions is up on our website and was designed keeping in mind both our experience and their demand. They include training and consultancy related to volunteer and volunteer program management, presentations, facilitation services and resources.

Reflections of OUR WORK in the mass-media

National Volunteering Week	Caravana SEV	Volunteque 3.0		
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A number of 239 news items (press, online media, radio, TV) were published in the media around the country during The National Volunteering Week 2013 (NVW) about the NVW and the volunteering activities carried out under its umbrella. The national radio channel Radio Romania Antena Satelor requested a live interview during the NVW and we provided input as well as contacts of other VIOs involved.

A further number of 110 articles appeared in the mass-media during Sept-Oct. 2013, regarding our event **Caravana SEV**. A series of 26 local events around the country, promoting volunteering and specifically the EVS program gathered 110 appearances in local media, written and online. **Volunteque 3.0**, a national meeting we and our partners organized in open space format with 100 participants from the volunteering domain (trainers, volunteers, ex EVS volunteers, NGO representatives, representatives of public institutions like a County Library and schools, specialists from other domains, press), was covered in the online media by 2 journalists from Think Outside The Box and blogunteer.ro.

A number of 5 articles (“Position paper about volunteering: why is volunteering worth to be practiced and supported”) were **published in the 2 largest national newspapers** and 3 major online media channels - Adevarul, Jurnalul National, Evenimentul Zilei, BuzzNews and Mediafax - within our project “gONG: Volunteering takes the stage!”. We also placed a **Facebook ad** for the promotion of volunteering, specifically European volunteering (in the context of the EVS program), leading to our site. The ad reached a target of 8431 people aged between 18 and 30 years which were directed to our website www.voluntareuropean.ro.

Through our involvement in the board of the VOLUM Federation we contributed to a wide TV campaign initiated by the national television TVR1 and the VOLUM Federation, which covered the activity of VIOs and topics related to volunteering for several months, and reached almost half of Romania's population. Pro Vobis was also actively involved in spreading the media content produced by the campaign. We have launched our redesigned website in the summer of 2013 and with it our blog: <http://www.provobis.ro/blog/>, where we write about trending volunteering issues.

STRENGTHENING our organisation

Staff training	Image	Sustainability	Networking	Strategic planning
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During 2013 the staff members of Pro Vobis participated in a series of **accredited training sessions**, having now certified 2 project managers, 2 trainers of trainers, 3 process improvement managers, and 1 video editor. In addition to staff members we also had a team of volunteers trained and certified as public purchase specialists and public relations specialists. In April 2014 Pro Vobis welcomed our **new team member** Daniela Temelie who took over the role of Project Coordinator being in charge with the National Volunteer Week and the support programs for VIOs.

On April 18th 2013, two members of the Pro Vobis team participated at a 2 day **workshop specialized on corporate volunteering**, organized by the European Volunteer Center (CEV) in Dublin, Ireland. The training and capacity building conference entitled “Making things EVEN” was organized in collaboration with Volunteering Ireland, which has extensive experience in corporate volunteering that was of benefit to us. We participated in a large number of parallel workshops intended for beginner and advanced levels of corporate volunteering know-how, as well as presentations held by well-known companies (Intel, IBM, Fundacion Telefonica, Google, GSK, etc) with large corporate volunteering programs.

Our **communications strategy** has been revised and new communication tools have been developed during 2013. The website www.provobis.ro has been redesigned in a more attractive and interactive format and its English version is currently being developed. The Pro Vobis newsletter has been improved and the data base of newsletter recipients has been updated, while the new website includes a blog aimed at improving the debate on topics related to volunteerism. During 2013 we also successfully tested webinars as a new communication and presentation delivery tool.

Our **funding base** has been improved by the development and launch of new fee-based services for companies and will continue in 2014. Several innovative project proposals have been submitted for funding in 2013, three of them developed in close partnership with public institutions. Other revenue sources were our fee-based training courses and our branded wall-planner.

During 2013 Pro Vobis also continued to invest in its external relations at both national and **international** level. At the national level we continue our involvement with the VOLUM Federation, the national umbrella organization for volunteerism developed at the initiative of Pro Vobis in 2010, being members of the Board of Directors and holding its vice-presidency since June. In October 2013 Pro Vobis has its representative elected as a member of the Board of Directors of the European Volunteer Center, aiming at improving our presence and networking capacity at European level. The involvement of Pro Vobis in the pilot projects towards the EU Aid Volunteers initiative of the European Commission has also profiled Pro Vobis as a training provider at the European level.

Two strategic planning sessions were organized in 2013, to discuss and develop our strategic plans. Development of new project ideas, the development of the services offered by Pro Vobis, the evaluation of our 2013 activities and planning for 2014 were some of the topics addressed by these sessions.



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