



“MOBILITY” PROJECT: EUROPEAN SENIOR VOLUNTEER EXCHANGE

Vincentians aged 50 years and above are a key force in our European member structure. They have great energy and potential and take over a multitude of responsibilities as Vincentians. Thanks to a grant of the European Union, the International Council General has been enabled to further develop and expand exchanges and international formation activities for Vincentians aged 50 + within the EU; and to thus help them to fulfil their fullest potential as volunteers.

Over the next three years, half yearly international formation meetings will provide a platform for networking and exchange. At the same time international study trips and exchanges of groups and individual Vincentians will foster the direct exchange of volunteers throughout Europe.

The options for cross-border mobility are manifold: For example, small groups of volunteers could study a certain project they are interested to start or enhance in their own community, or they could intensify already existing twinning relations through a face-to-face meeting. Individual Vincentians could offer their expertise, for example providing administrative training or help setting up a new project, expand recruitment activities, etc. Or they could travel in order to learn about a specific task themselves. Larger groups could go on more general visits to meet and exchange with their international “next door neighbours”, etc.

Almost anything goes as long as the exchanges have a special focus to enable the participants to learn from each others’ volunteering work. A limited number of trips can receive modest travel and subsistence allowances thanks to the EU grant.

Vincentians interested in participating on an exchange are invited to apply to CGI through their National Offices. A short application form will be made available after the summer. But even before this, as of now, expressions of interests are already highly welcomed.

Since its earliest beginnings the SSVP has been an international organisation. Only 12 years after its foundation in Paris in 1833, it had already spread all through Europe (and across the ocean) and its international development never stopped. The Mobility Project reminds us that reaching across borders has always been part of our roots.

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