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Guide to Volunteering, Solidarity and European Values



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INTRODUCTION

Volunteering has gained public interest in the last two decades, and the crises (i.e., COVID-19, climate warming, and Russia-Ukraine war-related) gave it higher visibility (Allam et al., 2020; UN, 2018). The European academic and NGO practitioners' debate about a healthy and sustainable volunteer environment becomes more important in this context (Koolen-Maas et al., 2023). According to empirical research, volunteering is increasing in EU countries due to different economic and social capital factors (Enjolras, 2021). Whereas new volunteer environment issues bring challenges in terms of volunteer management, the normative dimension builds the foundation for volunteering and volunteer management by orienting it to the EU's fundamental values of solidarity, justice, inclusion, and citizenship.

This particular "Guide to Volunteering, Solidarity and European Values" (hereafter – the Guide) is developed in the spirit of the EVI-DEMS' project exposed need which entails that Europe requires well-trained and qualified volunteer managers with a compass of common values as guidelines for sustainable usage of volunteer resources (EVI-DEMS, 2021; EVI-DEMS, 2023). EU normative guidance is important for accrediting voluntary managers for effective usage of skills, knowledge, and management instruments (EU volunteer management standards, etc.). It can be understood as a potential model for some essential capacities involved in volunteer management training or as a tool for the promotion of European solidarity and other fundamental European values. Finally, it can be seen as an instrument for Europeanization in different volunteer activity fields.

The Guide is relevant for the development of an "Educational program for Higher Education level for volunteer managers," and to be used for discussions and piloting course modules. This normative guidance document is contextually related to and complimenting the other outputs developed by the EVI-DEMS project: "European Code of Ethics for Volunteer Managers", "Guide on the Role of Volunteer Managers in Facilitating Inclusive Volunteering", and "Guide to Managing Volunteers Contributing to Disaster Prevention, Preparedness, and Recovery".

The target group gaining the most benefits in this subject field consists of those studying or teaching volunteer management subjects. There are also other potential readers such as volunteers, volunteer managers, NGO practitioners, and all those indifferent to the subject field.

The Guide includes five chapters - the first one covers basic volunteer and volunteering concepts explaining the meaning of volunteering which is based either on authoritative scientific interpretations or insights of international organizations. The second chapter explores value approaches relevant to volunteering and explains the distinctions and interactions between values (moral, organizational, etc.). The third chapter examines the EU's fundamental values and their legal and moral/ethical interpretations. The fourth chapter provides a meaningful distinction between EU values and principles and highlights the most relevant volunteering values which are explored in more detailed separate subsections, namely, human dignity, solicitude, participatory democracy, and non-discrimination. The fifth chapter discusses the process of instrumentalizing EU values by linking them to volunteer management instruments, practical activities, and contexts. The aim of this chapter is to disclose European values which could serve as guiding motivators for volunteer actions or viewpoints.

The "Guide to Volunteering, Solidarity and European Values" is developed by the Erasmus+ EVI-DEMS project consortium organizations and later improved by the project participants through networking consultations.



1. CONCEPTS AND BASIC PRINCIPLES

What is “volunteering” and who is “a volunteer”? The concepts of “volunteer” and “volunteering” may seem to be simple and clear, but deeper insight into the matter brings a more complex perception of the terms. It often depends on established usage, perceived volunteer activities, or contextual factors influencing its usage (Meijs et al., 2003; Butcher & Einolf, 2017). Most researchers agree that volunteering is grounded on four main bases: free will activity, formal organizations (volunteering in an NGO, association membership and volunteering, volunteering in special programs, etc.), proximity to the recipients or beneficiaries, and the availability of tangible rewards. Indeed, there are hundreds of different academic definitions explaining the meaning of “a volunteer” or “volunteering”, and this diversity is based on traditions, culture, volunteering style, and other cultural factors.

International Labor Organization (ILO) provides the authoritative definition stating that volunteering refers to “activities or work that some people willingly do without pay to promote a cause or help someone outside of their household or immediate family” (ILO, 2011, 12). Still, this definition seems to be too simplistic regarding the complex phenomenon of volunteering and lacks references to the normative bases.

In 2011, the European Council, European Parliament, and European Commission provided a broader and more heterogeneous definition explaining: “When it comes to volunteering, each country has different notions, definitions, and traditions. Volunteering is defined as all forms of voluntary activity, whether formal or informal. Volunteers act under their own free will, according to their own choices and motivations, and do not seek financial gain. Volunteering is a journey of solidarity and a way for individuals and associations to identify and address human, social, or environmental needs and concerns. Volunteering is often carried out in support of a non-profit organization or community-based initiative” (European Commission, 2011, p. 2). This multifaceted explanation highlights few significant aspects:

- The main EU political institutions have recognized that there are various cultural and legal contexts for volunteering and different volunteer profiles in Europe.
- Differences in definitional meanings are reduced and unified by universal foundational values, i.e., solidarity, justice, citizenship, and inclusion.

The Center for European Volunteering (CEV, the leading umbrella-type organization dedicated to the promotion and support of volunteers and volunteering in Europe) explained these fundamental values in terms of the development of social capital and a thriving civil society (CEV, 2011). These definitions show that EU values and principles are important for a unified understanding of volunteering and can be applied to everyday volunteers’ guidance.

Solidarity and volunteering. The concept of solidarity is a key concept for volunteering and EU policy, and politics directed toward wider integration (Laitinen & Pessi, 2014; 40; Lahusen, & Grasso, 2018a). In volunteering, the concept of solidarity applies when people group together out of a sense of unity and mutual support to work toward a similar goal. Solidarity is a fundamental value (social norm and obligation) and social bond (activity pattern, socialization) for joint action volunteers (O’Toole & Calvard, 2020). It also entails having a profound awareness of and empathy for the needs and sufferings of others. Basically, solidarity unites people who join forces either



because they have a common interest or because they feel deeply related to a certain group of people; it's all about people coming together to support each other despite any emotional or financial benefits. Volunteering activity is one of the potential basis for a strong and distinctive form of enacted solidarity.

Globally, all definitions of volunteering are based on the same four components (extent of free choice, level of organization, type of remuneration, and intended beneficiaries), but the perception is different depending on the level of specific volunteering activities; it varies not only between the countries and cultures, but also over the time and across volunteering sectors, from country to country, from community to community. Hence, volunteering can be understood as "a human-made, renewable resource that can be grown and recycled, and whose continuation and volume of flow can be influenced by human beings positively as well as negatively" (Koolen-Maas et al., 2023).

2. VALUES AND VOLUNTEERING

Why do people volunteer and what role do values play in their decision-making? The relationship between EU values as a normative basis and volunteering is multifaceted and complex. Volunteering is considered not only normatively but with reference to diverse approaches such as:

- motivational (volunteers have distinct motivational profiles),
- social (form of social capital, citizen civic engagement and networking, prosocial behaviours),
- cultural (continuous traditions, form of collective behaviour, cross-cultural viewpoints),
- economic (form of tangible rewards).

Thus, the different concepts are used to understand and explain this social phenomenon. NGOs, associations, and government organizations develop appropriate volunteer management policies and tools based on these approaches. For instance, they can focus on the development of volunteer motivational programs or concentrate on management ethics and organizational culture.

Still, the value-based explanatory conceptions and practical tools are very central despite the complexity of the approaches for understanding and managing volunteers.

Concept of values. Values are often mentioned in both everyday and specialized discourse. According to the Oxford Dictionary, values are "a set of ethical beliefs and preferences that



determine our sense of right and wrong" (Oxford, 2023). As a concept, it is described as very subjective, multi-layered, and contextual. Values function as the basis for normative orientations and ordering. In addition, they have been developed historically (i.e., the value of human dignity has been conceptualized as a reaction to the WWII atrocities; EU guiding values such as peace, integration, market freedom, solidarity, subsidiarity, and values based on constitutional traditions - democracy, rule of law, freedom, and other fundamental rights - have been guiding the EU integration processes since 1950 with the Schuman Declaration), (Frischhut, 2022). Values (or principles) are explained as (1) moral or ethical (codes of conduct in workplaces or principles in religions, etc.), (2) legal (demonstrate compliance with law and regulations), (3) social-political (ideals, principles, doctrines referring to social, political integration, etc.), (4) referring to management (guidelines or principles used to make decisions and determine course of action). In managerial approaches values provide basic guidance for developing ideas and activities initiated by leaders, managers, and other members of the organization. These guidelines then could be value-based (i.e., solidarity, social equality, democracy, etc.) or value-neutral (i.e., evidence-based, efficiency-based, etc.).

Values and principles. In EU legal, political, and policy discourses, the concepts of values and principles have been used in a complementary way. For instance, solidarity is one of the EU values and a legal principle in the Treaty on the European Union (TEU, 2012). In strict terms, the principles are understood as representations of values or essential starting points, or foundations (they are absolute, fixed, and eternal). The values are what you stand for among your friends, and the principles are what you stand for in life. In legal science, principles are essential elements of a legal order (Frischhut, 2022).

The moral foundations of volunteers' decision-making are complex and encompass different value dimensions (personal, cultural, religious, political, public policy beliefs, etc.). However, there is a lot of potential regarding possible connections between personal volunteer values and collective ones (i.e., NGO's ethical principles or organizational culture values), and more general (i.e., EU legal and policy values, ideas from political doctrines such as human rights sustainability). On the other hand, a potential conflict of values may arise because of incompatibilities or contradictions, for instance, religious norms could conflict with political doctrines, thus creating moral dilemmas or a sense of confusion while volunteering. Another limitation is that value orientation encompasses different levels of values and principles. It is important to note that values are multidimensional and dynamic, and straightforward causalities should be avoided. The value orientations used by volunteers have some sophistication, and all normative conceptions cannot be simplified.

According to research studies, values (personal, cultural, social, etc.) play an important role in the decision to volunteer (Dekker & Halman, 2003; Frederiksen et al., 2013; Grönlund, 2013). Value bases are important to volunteering because they are an element in the collective, cultural frame for guiding volunteers. The values act as an element for forming collective identities with organizations (NGOs, volunteer programs, etc.), systems (local, national EU service or project

provision systems, or policies for advocacy), and volunteers can feel connected, have a sense of belonging with others (Wegner et al., 2019). Value orientations are used as management instruments for programs, organizational, cultural, and ethical management, identity management, policy belief management systems in advocating networks, etc. Value systems are universal, and therefore volunteering values can contain core moral principles, public policy ideas, and legal norms. They are flexible in application and could be strong moral imperatives. These arguments can lead to the conclusion that values are important elements for volunteers' motivations as well as for volunteers' orientations.

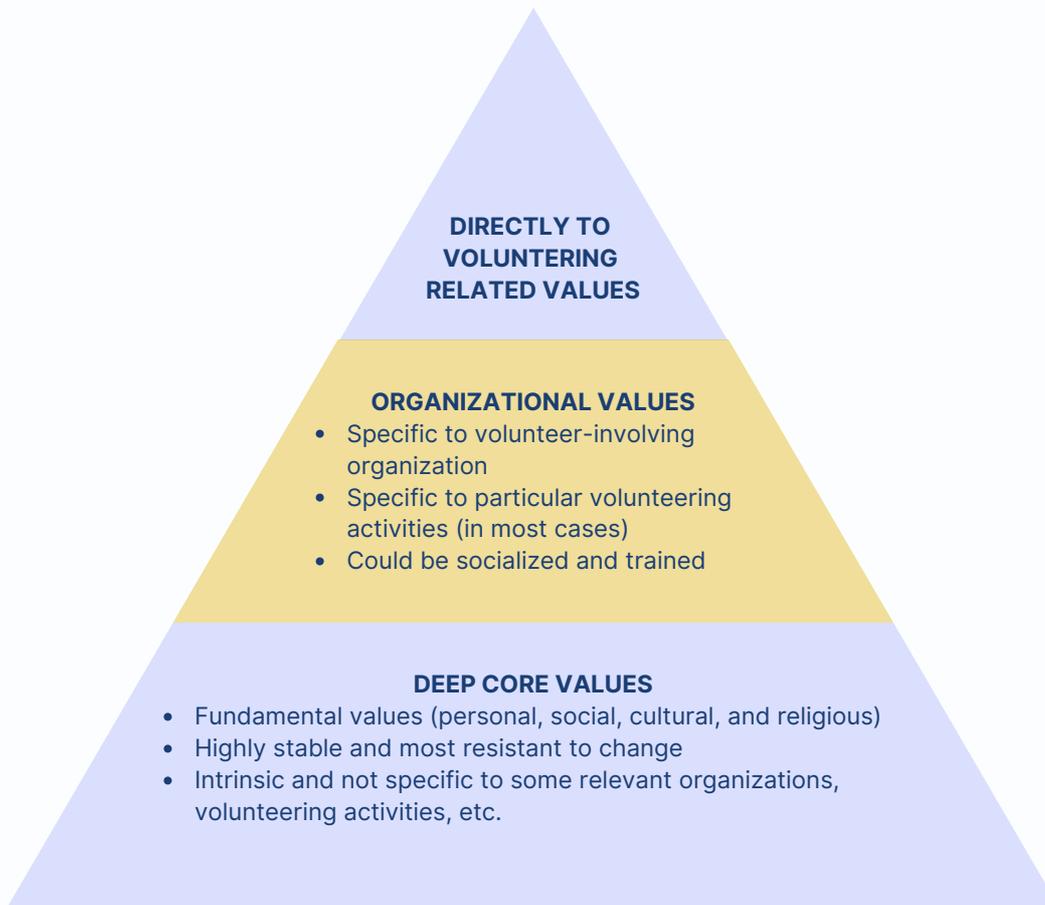
Picture 1 presents the three layers of volunteering-related values. There are deep core values (general value orientations) related to moral philosophy, religious and political doctrines, cultural ethos, etc. (i.e., Christianity, human rights doctrine, modern humanism ideas, liberal or socialist political ideologies, etc.). This group of values is relevant regarding the volunteers' self-determination and autonomous motivation in carrying out the activities.

Secondary layer values are related to volunteer-involving organizations, i.e., NGOs, associations, government organizations, etc. These values are more narrow in scope and attributed to organizational philosophies and perceptions. However, they may have stronger effects on volunteers than the core values. These values are listed in codes of ethics (volunteer-involving organizations), NGO philosophies, or descriptions of cultural management systems in order to form group or organizational identities. Some groups of volunteers (especially members of associations or long-term organizational volunteers) strongly identify themselves with these values being affected by cultural management instruments.

The last normative layer is related to values directly influencing most of the volunteers. Academic scholars and experts of the authoritative international organizations identified certain volunteering-related values that guide actions and motivate a significant proportion of volunteers, i.e., solidarity, compassion, empathy, inclusion, feelings about justice, fairness, and promotion of social harmony and equality, as well as individual and community well-being (Grönlund, 2013; Dekker & Halman, 2003; UN, 2021; UN, 2018; Mathou, 2010).

Overall, the abovementioned values attributed to different layers do not form precise and detailed value systems that could guide volunteers. The application of certain values depends on individuals or groups of volunteers and context factors (volunteer-involving organizations, volunteering activities, volunteering management models, etc.). The diversity of volunteering is a valuable phenomenon.





Picture 1. The three layers of volunteering-related values

Some values link public authorities to volunteers in a reciprocal, but not mutually valued relationship. On the positive side, collaborations between volunteer-involving organizations and some authorities (i.e., EU institutions, local government organizations, etc.) reinforce volunteering-related values. Volunteer and authority relations are not valuable in themselves, but some important values are embedded within them. These values are mostly related to legal regimes (i.e., legal doctrines widely integrating human or children's rights, refugee, and ethnic minority protection, etc.), and public policies (i.e., promoting gender or race equality, solidarity, non-discrimination, social care, etc.). The volunteer-involving organizations have partnership relations (and different connected activities) with some government institutions and get funding for projects, service provision, etc. This relationship encompasses value transmission or reinforcement. Retrospectively, shared value has been the basis for possible cooperation between EU institutions and NGOs (Lang, 2012). On the negative side, strong partnerships and dependence on government financial resources can weaken NGO advocacy and reduce criticism of public policies or political decisions. Despite the negatives, the values guidance offered by the government can be beneficial for volunteering. Especially when it is in line with the core values of volunteering.



3. FUNDAMENTAL EU VALUES

What are fundamental European values and why are they important? The fundamental values are identified and described in two articles of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) (TEU, 2012):

Article 2

The Union has been founded on the values of respect for **human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights**, including **the rights of persons belonging to minorities**. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which **pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and equality between women and men** prevail.

Article 3

The Union aims to promote peace, its values, and the well-being of its people.

2. The Union shall offer its citizens an area of **freedom, security, and justice** without internal frontiers, in which the free movement of persons is ensured in conjunction with appropriate measures concerning external border controls, asylum, immigration, and the prevention and combating of crime.

3. The Union shall establish an **internal market**. It shall work for the sustainable development of Europe based on balanced economic growth and price stability, a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress, and a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment.

It shall promote **scientific and technological advances**.

It shall combat **social exclusion and discrimination**, and shall promote **social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations, and protection of the rights of the child**.

It shall promote **economic, social, and territorial cohesion** and **solidarity** among Member States.

It shall respect its rich **cultural and linguistic diversity** and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced.

[...]

5. In its relations with the wider world, the Union shall uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens. It shall contribute to **peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity and mutual respect** among people, **free and fair trade, eradication of poverty**, and the **protection of human rights**, in particular the **rights of the child**, as well as to the strict **observance and the development of international law**, including **respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter**.

Some of those values, such as human rights, human dignity, social justice, and solidarity, are described explicitly in Article 2. Indeed, values like democracy, freedom, rule of law are explained as prerequisites (countries can specify them) by lawyers (Frischhut, 2022). Transparency and sustainability are defined by TEU as principles (TEU, Art. 3 and Art. 5).

Fundamental values (Source: TEU Article 2; Lisbon Treaty). Important for member states and EU agencies	European society values (Source: TEU Article 2). Related to public morality and societies in member states	Not directly expressed values (Source: TEU Articles 3; 5; 6)	Specific values in different legal documents: sport related values Relevant to various policy fields. Sources: EP resolution 2013; EC conclusion, 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect for human dignity • freedom • democracy • equality • the rule of law • respect for human rights (minorities, children) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pluralism • non-discrimination • tolerance • justice • solidarity • equality between women and men 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • democracy • freedom • rule of law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect • friendship • tolerance • fair play

Table 1. Types of EU fundamental and specific values

Fundamental values are related to the EU treaties, legal doctrine, and system, and are constitutional in nature (related to general principles of EU law). They are clarified by the judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU, 2008). It is important to note that EU Member States recognize, respect, and implement common EU values (based on the principle of mutual trust). The European fundamental values and legal principles are linked to the provisions of EU laws, documents (executive and legislative), and case law.

To sum up, the EU fundamental values (ethical and legal principles) are related to the Treaty on the European Union (2 Articles) and other legal documents. The EU values bridge moral philosophy (ethics) and law. The EU fundamental values are understood as ‘ideas’ and concepts’, and defined as values, EU law principles, or EU objectives.

4. EU SHARED VALUES AND VOLUNTEERING

The EU's fundamental and specific (EU policy-related) values can be expressed through volunteering. The volunteers often play an important role as valuable resources helping to solve different social, economic, and public policy-related issues. It is argued that volunteering is a valuable activity and can be assumed to be an expression of solidarity value in Europe (Parsanoglou, 2021; Robertson, 2013; Freedman, 2018; Dostál, 2021; CEV, 2011; CEV, 2018). It is stressed by volunteer advocates in EU policy processes that volunteering is „paving the way to making European values a reality" (CEV, 2018). The empirical research reveals that some volunteering actions are changing society (new solidarity and social mobilization structures are formed or civil society actors are strengthened), and that is especially true in times of crisis (Parsanoglou, 2021; Freedman, 2018).

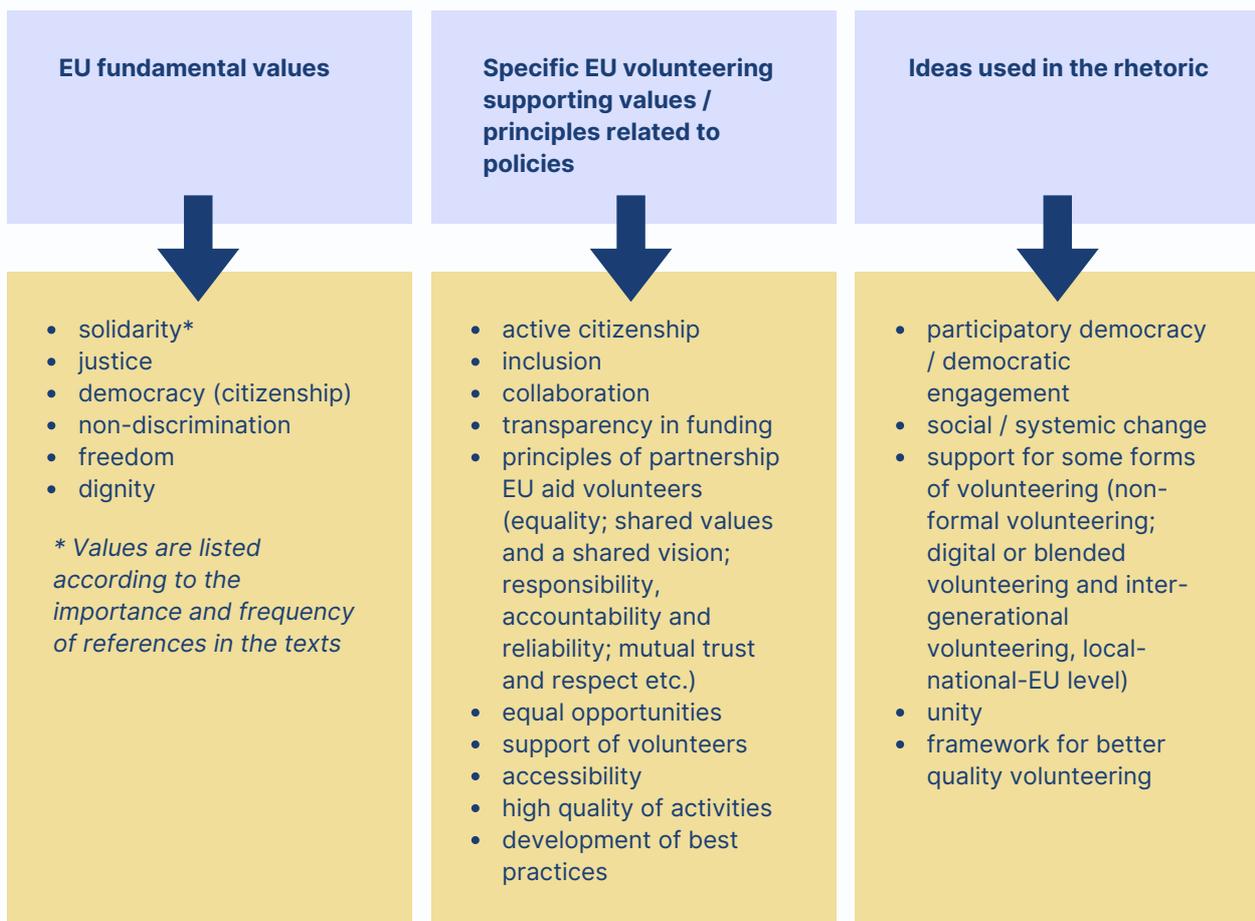


Table 2. EU values are most commonly associated with volunteering



Still, the concept of EU values (namely, the value of solidarity in general) is related to volunteering activities in terms of guidance and motivation. For instance, the importance of EU-added values for guiding volunteers is revealed in the context of the migration crisis (2016–2021) facing the conflict between EU values (solidarity with asylum seekers, refugees, or migrants) and interests (national security, anti-migration) or values (conservative social and migration policy, nationalism, and sovereignty, etc.) (Bernát et al., 2016; Parsanoglou, 2021; Freedman, 2018). According to research, by helping asylum seekers and migrants some volunteers have changed their attitudes towards migrants reducing in a way some social tensions. The EU's values, ideas, and legal principles guided the activists and were used as the argument. Indeed, some concepts of EU values (i.e., solidarity) are overused and misapplied in some discourses (for instance, in political rhetoric), and different meanings are put behind them (Scholz, 2008; Tava, 2021). Therefore, it is necessary to use the concepts of EU values by linking legal and ethical terms and referring to key sources if it is necessary.

What are the policy documents referring to the EU values for volunteering? This question could be answered in detail by summarizing main policy documents (EU policy for support of volunteering) and policy proposals (CEV, 2011, CEV, 2018; EU Commission, 2011; Regulation EU, 2021; EU Commission Delegated Regulation, 2014; EU Commission Proposal, 2022; European Economic and Social Committee Opinion, 2022; Europe for Citizens Programme, 2020; EU Council Recommendation, 2022, etc.).

4.1 VALUE OF HUMAN DIGNITY

Human dignity is understood as a universal value and as a general legal principle (as it was clarified according to the decisions in the courts) (Jones, 2012; Frischhut, 2022). Human dignity is one of the most important fundamental values ('meta-value' in comparison to others listed in Art. 2 of TEU (TEU, Art. 2). The TEU does not define this concept because it is a very general principle. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, human dignity means "the importance and value that a person has that makes other people respect them or makes them respect themselves" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023). This concept is explained by examples that breach human dignity through acts of discrimination, stigmatization, harassment, certain prejudices, etc. (Jones, 2012). Human dignity is legally related to a number of rights: rights to integrity of person; rights to life; prohibition of inhuman treatment or punishment; prohibition of torture; prohibition of slavery and forced labour. Human dignity is very central among other EU values because it carries a lot of legal weight and is beneficial to people living in the EU. It was conceptualized as a constitutional principle (Morano-Foadi, et Andreadakis, 2021).

The concept of human dignity is used in many other EU laws, such as those relating to asylum, migration regulations, service provision (Service Directive on the Internal Market, 2006), protection of biotechnological interventions, etc. It also helps to protect the rights of victims of crimes and sexual orientation discrimination. According to the research, human dignity is a common fundamental value in most EU member states (Morano-Foadi, et Andreadakis, 2021). Nevertheless, human dignity has different meanings as a fundamental principle and, in a way, an abstract principle. However, this value is applied as a moral and legal safeguard in other spheres like protection of privacy, fair employment, and the development of personality.



The EU Member States and EU institutions are legally obliged to respect and protect the dignity of individuals or groups. Besides, the protection of human dignity (as an essential element of European human rights conception) is the instrument for the Europeanization of social protection, social service provision, and other important regulatory or public service systems. Human dignity as a fundamental value and right helps to integrate and Europeanize different types of national legal and social systems, and consequently, helps to protect vulnerable persons or certain groups.

Looking for links between the concept of human dignity (as the European value) and volunteering, one can ask how this value can be relevant and put into practice. There are several relevant areas and reference points.

The EU legal concept corresponds to the general value-based notion of dignity, and the legal concept is compatible with volunteers and some NGOs ethos (i.e., human rights NGOs and others), charities, etc. For instance, NGOs (regarded as 'norms or value entrepreneurs') translate human rights values to volunteers (Schneider & Dany, 2018; Barnett & Weiss, 2013). So, managerial and organizational identities and beliefs are transferred to the volunteers. The EU Commission seeks that humanitarian NGOs adopt and implement EU values and norms when working with aid programs or similar. From this perspective, the notion of human dignity as a core European value reflects and resonates with the attitudes of different actors and has an integrating effect.

As stated above, a lot of people are volunteering (providing services, monitoring and helping, acting as advocates, engaging in decision-making, etc.) in different areas to protect human dignity or prevent its breach. For instance, human dignity and other principles are relevant to humanitarian movement, humanitarian action, humanitarian aid provision, and humanitarian ethics, and they are important for people involved in volunteering (Skim, 2015).

The dignity of all victims and persons in need is a central value in EU humanitarian aid actions (with references to TEU 2 Art.) (Broberg, 2014). Some NGOs that engage volunteers have various so-called human dignity-volunteer initiatives and programs. It forms strong group identity, commitment, and intense involvement in some cases. For instance, the human dignity of asylum seekers and solidarity with them were central values for volunteers working in Lesbos Island (Mediterranean, Greece) in 2016. According to ethnographic research, the volunteers (formal volunteers and 'tourist-volunteers' or informal) used the motto and strategic aim "to stand by the refugees with 'dignity'" (Papataxiarchis, 2016, p. 8). This research discovered that professional aid workers had slightly different values in comparison to non-formal volunteers (Papataxiarchis, 2016; Witcher, 2020).

To sum up, human dignity is a core value in comparison to other EU values. It is also acknowledged as a fundamental human right and the European concept. Human dignity is a legal EU principle but not an EU objective. Human dignity as an intrinsic value refers to different aspects (recognition of the ability to grow personally, exclusion of humiliation, etc.).



Human dignity is an important value for volunteering activities as (1) a normative basis for decision-making on volunteering; (2) as a foundation for the European identity that is relevant to certain activities; (3) as a fundamental legal principle that can be universally applied in many areas; (4) as a possible organizational culture (for NGOs involving volunteers) and as an objective of the activity; and (5) as neutral in terms of the truths of the faith, the dogmas.

4.2 VALUE OF EU SOLIDARITY AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

Value of solidarity. The European core value of solidarity is very important (from an applied perspective) for volunteers and volunteer activities. Firstly, it is critical to remember that value is fixed but not defined in the TEU 2 Article or other EU legal acts. As a legal principle and objective, solidarity is reflected in many EU policies and actions and is important for the EU integration process (Grimmel & Giang, 2017). Secondly, solidarity as a multilayered concept has different meanings (unity; joint care for one another; feeling of actions based on the mutual interests among persons, but also possibly among organizations, nations, and states). Solidarity has a normative dimension, but it also implies prerequisites for cooperative behavior. It is also linked to moral obligation (Habermas, 2013). In addition to that, solidarity is an important concept for voluntary sense-making (identity formation), motivation, and ethical dilemma-solving. In EU law, solidarity has three dimensions: (1) it is a value (TEU, Article 2); (2) it is the core of EU objectives (TEU, Article 3); and (3) it is a form of fundamental rights (Frischhut, 2022).

However, the concept of EU solidarity value is sometimes overloaded with different meanings and there is no shared one (Steinvorth, 2017; Grimmel & Giang, 2017). The question is, how could it possibly be important for volunteers? Looking into the EU field of politics, it is evident that solidarity is related to the relationship between the Member States (political solidarity). It is one of the objectives of the EU (TEU, Article 3). Besides, the principle of solidarity is applied to asylum and immigration as policies with shared responsibilities (The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, TFEU; Article 80). The 3 Articles of TEU mention the concept of 'solidarity between generations' (TEU, 2012). The principle of solidarity is applied to external relations and the international scene (TEU, Articles 3 and 5). The principle of solidarity could be linked to other fields like social security, health, volunteering, etc. (Frischhut, 2022). At the end, the EU solidarity value-principle has political, public policy, legal, and ethical dimensions, and they overlap in some cases. It is therefore necessary to take into account the meanings and possible applications of this concept. It is advisable to use it in relation to empirical cases (e.g., European volunteer cooperation, networking, etc., or EU court rulings, legislation providing for acting in solidarity) and specific contexts.

The value of solidarity underpins the EU's public policy support for volunteering. This is explained by different approaches. Firstly, it is reflected that volunteers form a valuable social resource and they are strengthening social solidarity in different communities through voluntary activities. According to EU documents, volunteering is understood as the most visible expression of solidarity (European Economic and Social Committee Opinion, 2022). Secondly, volunteering is understood as a helpful tool in the implementation of EU policies (supporting and promoting global



and social solidarity, etc.). Therefore, the EU supports solidarity-based activities such as the European Solidarity Corps, and bases this initiative on European solidarity values; this instrument creates opportunities for young people to volunteer in their own country or abroad (European Commission, 2022). A third point, solidarity is related to the conceptions of participatory democracy and active citizenship. For this reason, the EU has various instruments for supporting volunteering, especially those that have a transnational nature. For instance, the European Commission supported the idea of the European Volunteering Capital competition initiative which was based on a cross-border volunteering approach (CEV, 2023). Overall, European solidarity is an important basis for the development of EU policies and actions to support volunteering.

The concept of solidarity is very meaningful for different volunteers - daily feelings of solidarity are quite intense as motivators, grounded in personal encounters with similar or common issues and concerns. The concept of European solidarity includes several dimensions (Hustin et al., 2003) - European solidarity could be understood as a virtue because (1) some volunteers in Europe share similar goals in volunteering; (2) solidarity is between equal persons taking voluntary activities (it presupposes a relational commitment to actions taken and equality between persons); indeed, the status of self-advocates with NGOs and their professional staff can also be defined based on the principles of solidarity, but there are nuances in this relationship; (3) volunteers help other people thinking that they can get into similar miserable situations; (4) volunteers are pursuing the same goals and acting on an equal basis (equally free), rejecting domination. Thus, the impact of solidarity values on volunteers' behavior takes several forms: (1) It is solidarity between volunteers, or 'interpersonal' social solidarity (also possible in European networks, European-level movements, EU volunteering programs, crisis volunteering, etc.); (2) it is solidarity with people in difficulty (i.e., disabled people, victims of natural disasters, migrants, asylum seekers, etc.); and (3) the EU solidarity value (about the other fundamental values) provides a conceptual framework for action.

According to empirical evidence, volunteers are often engaged in volunteering by so-called 'solidarity movements' during crisis times, and emotional (together with other socio-economic and cultural-idealistic) incentives play an important role (Hamann & Karakayali, 2016; Kiess et al., 2018). Some volunteers become unruly (coordinating NGOs or agencies) in crisis volunteering due to a passionate sense of solidarity and some strong ideas (Fleischmann, 2019).

In line with the studies, collective solidarity is an important motivator for long-term commitment to volunteering based on common interest and social-emotional attachment to volunteers engaging organizations (Schlesinger et al., 2013; Wegner et al., 2019). Other researcher findings reveal that European crises and volunteering are related to some particular forms of solidarity (Fleischmann, 2019). It encompasses not only solidarity with victims or



people in need (i.e., victims of natural disasters, incoming migrants or asylum seekers, etc.), but also certain forms of political activism (Kiess et al., 2018). The above-mentioned research in the field of solidarity reveals its relation to other values and concepts, like solidarity and justice, solidarity and citizenship, and solidarity and democratic engagement.

Ideas of European citizen-centered solidarity and participatory democracy. The idea of European solidarity is a new social doctrine and, at the same time, an intellectual conception (Lahusen & Grasso, 2018a; Ellison, 2011). The ideals and issues of European citizen-centered solidarity (the implications on EU policies and political decision-makers) have been debated since the 2008 crises. The new conception of European solidarity includes several components referring to (1) social (community, or group of persons which support each other; group-bound solidarities); (2) rights-based (political or civic) solidarity (Lahusen & Grasso 2018b; Wallaschek, 2019). Some scholars differentiate civic and social solidarity (Lahusen, & Grasso, 2018b). The conception of citizen-centered solidarity is a complex phenomenon and social doctrine is undeveloped. Some scholars are raising questions and asking if the EU has social solidarity and raises arguments about the deficit of European identities among the public. For instance, Kathleen R. McNamara argues that Europeans do not have social solidarity and a sense of political community (2015, p.167). Jurgen Habermas (2013) reasoned the deficit of European solidarity, explored its negative effects, and called for widening EU integration and especially social policies. After all, the new ideas about European citizen-centered solidarity are sophisticated and lack conceptual soundness.

While conceptualizations are important for academic and political debates, it is also crucial to look into the research findings. Sociological, communication and public policy studies have evidenced that European citizen-centered solidarity has not been strong on a personal level (moderate support for some kinds of EU internal solidarity measures) and even some crises (refugee, COVID-19, etc.) have not strengthened it (Lahusen & Grasso, 2018b; IIs et al., 2021; Wallaschek, 2019). On the other hand, social solidarity is quite strong for some groups of social and political activists, volunteers, networking NGOs, and other actors. Indeed, citizens' solidarity depends on several factors, i.e., interpersonal trust, level of religiosity, national-cultural factors (depending on the state where they live), civic and political orientations, socio-demographic characteristics, and social resources (Lahusen & Grasso, 2018b). As a result, active citizens (NGO members, activists, volunteers, etc.) could be seen as the main actors in strengthening citizen-centered European solidarity.

Equally important is the related EU value of solidarity with the ideas of **participatory democracy and active citizenship**. Firstly, it is necessary to indicate that **democracy is the European value and the general principle of EU law** (TEU 2 Article). From this point, it is understood as one of the fundamental rights. Besides, the European Democracy Principle covers and values different forms of democracy (electoral and participatory) (Frischhut, 2022). Citizen involvement in the EU political process is defined as the right to participate in democratic life (TEU, Article 10) and individual participation in elections. In 2007, EU institutions established an instrument for citizens' collective participation in policy decision-making (introduced with the Treaty of Lisbon) - the European Citizens' Initiative (European Commission, 2023). EU citizens were given rights to actively participate in EU governance and policy-making (Walter. 2017). Thus, political participation is not merely a symbolic policy-making thing. The values and principles of democracy are related to other values like transparency, integrity, freedom, human rights, etc. It's critical to emphasize how essential EU democracy has become due to the EU integration. On the other side, there are a lot of



political challenges and new issues due to specific features of the EU political field. Democratic values are difficult to implement in terms of relevant legal principles, functioning institutions, specific participation mechanisms, etc. In this perspective, the direct involvement of citizens is also important. In 2005, the European Commission developed the concept of active citizen involvement and introduced supporting mechanisms in response to democratic crises (Bee, 2017; Walter, 2016; Bee & Guerrina, 2015). This was supported by the 2004 European Council Decision (EU Council Decision). This policy turn was a kind of restart of the mechanisms of civic and political participation by bringing in new ideas. However, the aim and objectives of these decisions were to form stronger identities with EU citizenship. According to the official definitions of the European Commission, "active citizenship is an umbrella term for the acquisition and exercise of rights for civic and political participation. As such, it includes citizenship and residence, membership in (political) organizations, voting, running for office, volunteering, or participation in political protest" (European Commission, 2023b). It is important to note that this concept relates informal (not voting or policy consultations related to the legislative process) participation to volunteering. Besides, active citizen involvement is not only a general idea but also one of 11 policy principles related to EU integration. It is not mandatory and is used as a guide to assist EU Member States. Thus, this guide was important for the Europeanization of Member States policies related to the support of participatory governance and citizen engagement (Europeanization of the public sphere).

According to the research, the development of active citizenship was a response to EU crises (negative effects of integration, migration, politics, etc.). The EU institutions raised and conceptualized active citizenship-related social ideas to change people's identities and collective participatory behaviors (Bee, 2017). The EU institutions also aimed to reinforce EU citizenship (stronger identities, mobilization of supporting networks, and enabling new processes of active participation) (Bee & Guerrina, 2015). Indeed, some empirical studies and evaluations provide evidence that these policies supporting the idea of active citizenship have gaps in implementation (Walter, 2016; European Commission, 2022; European Commission, 2015). The EU Commission had formed a citizens participation and inclusion policy based on a consolidative strategy and different policy programs (for example, Europe for Citizens, 2007–2013; Europe for Citizens support program and initiatives, 2014–2020; Europe for Citizens initiative, 2014–2020; Rights, Equality, and Citizenship Programme, 2014–2020, etc.). The specific instruments have been related to the enablement of volunteers as a target group for civic participation. For example, EU institutions used the European Year of Volunteering to create a better environment for volunteering and raise awareness about voluntary activities in 2011 (11 million Euros budgeting).

Civic engagement, volunteering, and EU values and policies. Engagement is a very broad concept that has many definitions and denominators. According to researcher Christiano Bee (2017), "civic engagement consists in the expression of ideas, interests, feelings, knowledge, opinions, and attitudes toward the life of a given civic community". It is often used with other concepts like political engagement, civic participation, and active citizenship (the umbrella concept). It also encompasses individual (understanding civic values, having civic interests in media and institutions, etc.) and collective dimensions (belonging to the group with social interests, specific group identity, and lifestyle). Civic values are important as the guiding compass for people's behavior. As it was discussed above, the EU system of values corresponds to the main civic values. Another important point is that participation in volunteer groups or individual volunteering is very relevant to civic engagement. For this reason,



EU institutions design policy instruments to support volunteering (work programs, funding schemas, formalized instruments of participation, etc.) as a form of civic participation.

4.3 VALUE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The value of non-discrimination is the fundamental value and general legal principle upheld by TEU Article 2. EU policies, political decisions, and legal decisions are addressed to "...combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations, and protection of the rights of the child" (TEU Article 3). Moreover, the value of non-discrimination is also a fundamental human right, and it is enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (CFR, Article 21). This value encompasses two meanings: non-discrimination of a person or group of people and equality before the law (Frischhut, 2022).

Refusal of services	Service providers decline to serve customers due to religious beliefs, age, race, or sexual orientation.
Access to services	Public or private services are not provided for disabled people.
Pay inequity	Paying workers differently for the same work depending on their age, gender, etc.
Employment discrimination	When a qualified applicant is passed over for a job or promotion due to gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, etc.
Housing discrimination	Property owners refuse to rent or sell houses or flats to individuals or families due to their nationality, ethnicity, or migration statuses.
Educational discrimination	Denying admission or equal educational opportunities to students based on their background, disability, or other protected characteristic goes against the principle of non-discrimination.

Table 3. Examples of situations where the principle of non-discrimination might be breached

Equality is understood as compliance with conditions of equal treatment. The value of non-discrimination is interlinked with other EU values, specifically justice. To sum up, the European value of non-discrimination is also a key legal principle and a human right.

European values and EU primary, secondary, and case laws. There is a close relationship between European values and EU law. EU primary law is the supreme source of law in the EU. It contains the EU treaties (founding, amending, and accession), the supplementary agreements, and the EU Charter of fundamental rights. EU primary law enshrines values and establishes a framework to ensure their adherence and promotion, safeguarding, and enforcement across all EU institutions and Member States. EU secondary law is designed to provide detailed rules, procedures, and mechanisms necessary for the practical application of the principles and objectives laid out in the primary law. Secondary law can take various forms and include regulations, directives, binding decisions, recommendations, opinions, etc. The CJEU (Court of Justice of the European Union) and other European courts play a key role in interpreting and developing primary law. They provide direction on how EU values are integrated into the application and enforcement of primary law.



This principle of non-discrimination (or the prohibition on discrimination) can give concrete meaning in relation to specific comparable situations when rules are breached. This concept is difficult to explain and define in an abstract way (Zaccaroni, 2021). The value of non-discrimination (or equality before rule / law) is relational and unique. For instance, the principle of non-discrimination is breached by unjust treatment of persons based on age, race, religious beliefs, disability, or sex (Sugarman & Butler, 2011). Table 3 presents the common examples.

The value of non-discrimination is not only a constitutional or key principle, but also based on EU secondary and case laws.

The objective of non-discrimination legislation is to give everyone an equitable chance to take advantage of opportunities that are available in their lives. EU legal acts and the European Court of Human Rights provide protection from discrimination in Europe to individuals and vulnerable groups. The EU non-discrimination principle applies to the regulation of legal relations in different areas. It seeks to prohibit discrimination and covers the citizen related (person-related) and economic fundamental (good movement related) fields (see Table 4) (Frischhut, 2022, p. 105–106).



Directives from the EU are incorporated into national law and lead to legal obligations. This value has a binding effect. On the other hand, the value of non-discrimination shapes EU, social norms and it is the basis for Europeanization of national policies.

EU policymakers care about treating everyone fairly and equally, based on the principle of non-discrimination. This value contributes to the EU's broader goals of social diversity and inclusion. Non-discrimination helps minimize negative effects or eliminate stereotypes, prejudices, and systemic inequalities.

How the EU value of non-discrimination (equality) could be applied in volunteering activities? Firstly, people are not only doing something good for others by volunteering but also taking part in building more equal and inclusive European societies (Širca et al., 2016). As it was mentioned, they are taking part in what the EU's politics, policies, and institutions stand for. In other words, the volunteers' activities embody the value of non-discrimination and equality. Indeed, the specific normative approach and civic values are important as well. Secondly, volunteering has an impact on enhancing social life through socialization (i.e., building support networks, forming a sense of belonging, exploring new interests, etc.), learning (new social skills and experiences), and a profound interception of values. So, the value of non-discrimination can be adopted by volunteers through involvement in specific activities. Third, volunteers often volunteer to help groups of people who experience some form of discrimination. They, along with NGO workers, assist or advocate for people who may be treated unfairly or unequally due to factors like their age, race, gender, disability, etc. (Witcher, 2021; Valls& Kyriakides, 2013). Finally, the EU value of non-discrimination is a very general value that could be differently applied regarding volunteering activities or volunteer engagement.

Grounds Field	Race	Religion	Disability	Age	Sexual orientation	Sex
Employment & training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Education	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Social protection	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Goods & services	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes

Table 4. Legal framework based on EU non-discriminative directives

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF EU VALUES IN VOLUNTEERING: MANAGEMENT TOOLS AND PRACTISES

European value instrumentalization is a key process for translating abstract values and principles into practical actions. It is important because it bridges high ideals with voluntary work realities and contextual issues. The volunteer managers could ensure that European values are not empty statements but could be used as guiding drives (motivators) for volunteer actions or viewpoints. Other values play an important role in volunteering, and they can be differently instrumentalized by volunteer managers. This part will discuss the instrumentalization and use of values in volunteer management in the context of commonly used tools. Volunteer managers and engaging people can contribute to embedding values in volunteering.

1. Help the volunteers understand EU values

Volunteer managers can explain to volunteers the importance of the values promoted by the EU and other values in volunteering. Management by EU values requires the right socialization tools and support. It could be achieved by different approaches: 1) The familiarization of volunteers with EU values, principles, and human rights, as well as certain policies (relevant to volunteering activities), missions, aims, and objectives. 2) Communication of values in meetings, sessions for new volunteers, etc. 3) The discussions on values in orientation sessions for new volunteers. 4) Evaluations by value-driven management using different techniques.

2. The creation of an EU value-driven culture

(Related to volunteering programs, projects, etc.). Firstly, it requires certain design by covering EU values and organizational (if volunteers are engaged by NGO) values. The design could encompass some cultural elements like narratives (stories related to applications of EU values, possibly EU policy jargon or rhetorical elements, EU policy-related jokes, etc.), symbols (formal EU symbols, but also some informal or not directly linked to emblematic symbols), rituals (daily or/and festive) integrating the meanings of specific values in ceremonies, and even some artifacts. The EU value-driven culture could be related to the volunteering program, or it could be linked to the culture of the NGO organization which involves volunteers. In the latter case, it is important to reconcile European values with the values of the organization's culture to avoid conflicts of values or value-prioritization. This laid the foundation for building up a new culture or changing the existing one. The creation of a value-driven culture may require effective communication forms (in meetings, by e-mail, etc.), training (orientation or cultural awareness workshops, mentorship programs, cultural immersion activities, guidance, storytelling exercises, etc.), or leadership styles. It's central to fit these socialization options to specific cultures and European values as a value compass. A mixture of experiential learning, formal training, and ongoing support could help volunteers understand and embrace the organizational culture.

3. EU values integration into volunteering programs and project management

This could be achieved by embedding values into operational management and integrating values into program or project design. In the last case, the program and project missions could be aligned with EU values, for instance, the design of programs could embrace social inclusion, in line with EU values of respect for human rights, human dignity, and solidarity in

supporting vulnerable groups. It is also possible to foster environmental sustainability. It is important to incorporate EU values into programs or project missions in accordance with EU values for better awareness by volunteers, stakeholders, and other involved participants (see Table 5).

Value-driven volunteer operational management could be realized by aligning procedures and policies with EU values. For example, the volunteer managers could incorporate EU values into strategic decision-making, project planning, and execution. The EU values could be normative criteria for evaluation or volunteering programs and projects. Communication based on EU values can reveal the program's commitments and responsibilities.

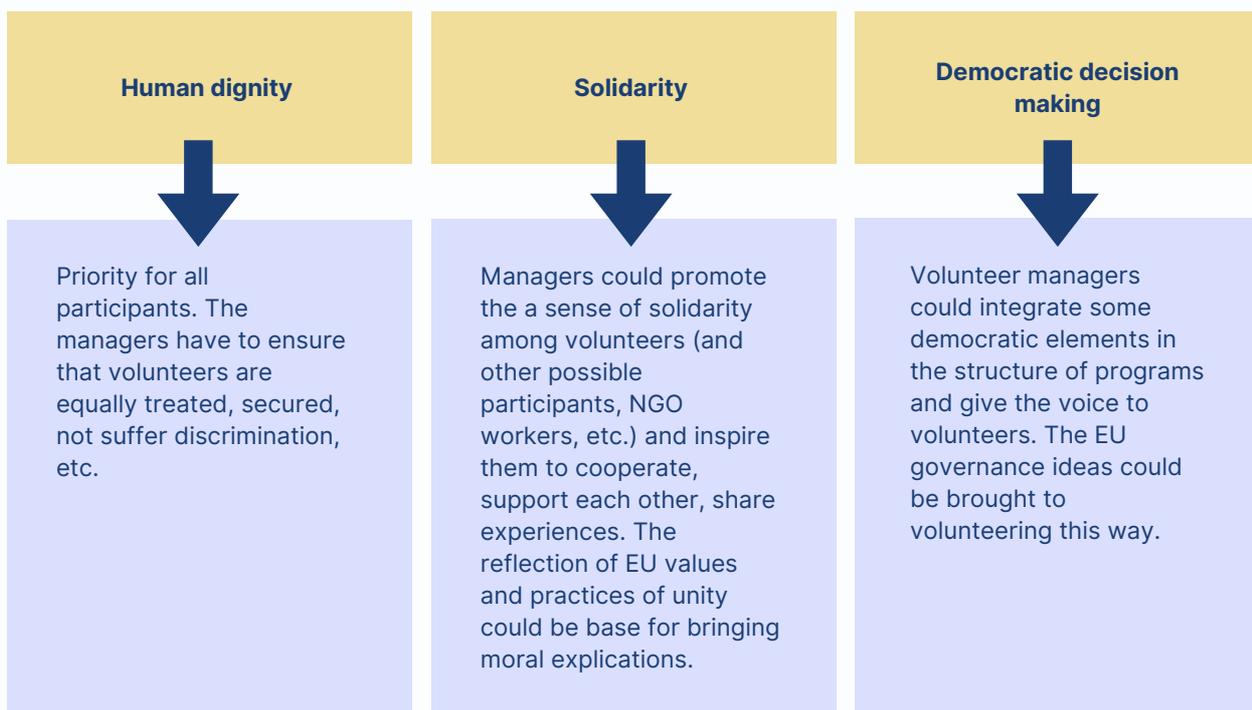


Table 5. Legal framework based on EU non-discriminative directives

4. EU value-based leadership

Encourage volunteer managers to become leaders by exemplifying the values through their actions and interactions. They could demonstrate and promote the core EU values through specific leadership styles and behaviors. These leaders could consistently exhibit their behavior which presents EU values and transmits them through supporting culture, climate, etc. For instance, a local community volunteer manager as a social leader could promote solidarity and cooperation by using a democratic, affiliative, or delegative style. The volunteer leaders could possibly demonstrate commitment, enthusiasm, and willingness to collaborate with volunteers from the local community. They could also create an inclusive culture where all volunteers are respected and feel valued. It is important to note that building up a leadership approach (along with a genuine commitment to European values) requires time and some specific skills, for instance, communication.



5. The volunteer ethic and volunteer management by values

The ethics of volunteering and the values of volunteering are two sides of the same coin - they encompass values as moral principles or guidelines that volunteers or related organizations use for engaging in volunteer activities. Both instruments could be used for the alignment of European values with volunteering and related activities. Ethical conduct ensures fairness and responsibility while values infuse passion and purpose into volunteer initiatives.

European value instrumentalization is crucial for translating abstract values into practical actions, bridging high ideals with voluntary work realities. Volunteer managers can help volunteers understand EU values by explaining their importance, creating an EU value-driven culture, and integrating EU values into volunteering programs and project management. This involves familiarizing volunteers with EU values, communicating values in meetings, and conducting evaluations using various techniques. Additionally, integrating EU values into programs and project design can foster social inclusion, respect for human rights, and environmental sustainability.

Value-based volunteer management and volunteer autonomy. Values-based volunteer management is not prescriptive and mandatory. According to the research findings and the framework of self-determination theory, it is important to take into account the volunteers' individual choices, accept volunteer perspectives, and offer some space for personal decisions (Oostlander et al., 2014). It is very vital to provide autonomous motivation for volunteer managers. From this perspective, the personal values of volunteers should be aligned with managerial or European values. The managers could create an autonomy-supportive climate that upholds European values and gives discretion to the views and actions of volunteers. This way, volunteers could feel more empowered and engaged.

FINAL REMARKS

1. The relationship between EU values and volunteering is treated as complex and multifaceted. Values are subjective and multi-layered, therefore contextual concepts guide normative orientations and ordering. Values are used in various fields including legal, social-political, and managerial. However, there is potential for value conflict due to incompatibilities or contradictions between personal volunteer values and collective or general values. Value orientations used by volunteers have some sophistication and all normative conceptions cannot be simplified.
2. The European Union has been founded on the values such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and human rights. These values are common to the EU's Member States promoting pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and equality. The EU's shared values and volunteering are often viewed as valuable resources

that help to solve social, economic, and public policy-related problems. Volunteers are seen as an expression of solidarity value in Europe, paving the way for the realization of European values. Research shows that volunteering can change society by forming new solidarity and social mobilization structures, especially during times of crisis. The EU's values, ideas, and legal principles guide volunteers, as seen in the context of the migration crisis. The key EU values for volunteering include solidarity, justice, democracy, non-discrimination, freedom, active citizenship, inclusion, collaboration, transparency in funding, principles of partnership, equal opportunities, support of volunteers, accessibility, high-quality activities, participatory democracy, social/systemic change, support for some forms of volunteering, unity, and a framework for better quality volunteering. Human dignity is a universal value and a general legal principle and is one of the most important fundamental values in the EU.



3. European value instrumentalization is crucial for translating abstract values into practical actions, bridging high ideals with voluntary work realities. Volunteer managers can help volunteers to understand the EU values by explaining their importance, creating the EU value-driven culture, and integrating EU values into volunteering programs and project management. This involves familiarizing volunteers with the EU values, communicating values in meetings, and conducting evaluations using various techniques. Additionally, integrating the EU values into programs and project design can foster social inclusion, respect for human rights, and environmental sustainability.



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