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# Thesis

## Let's get international!

Young adults' motivation to volunteer in intercultural youth work

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Degree Programme in Civic Activities and Youth Work,  
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(210 ECTS)

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## ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this thesis was to determine which factors influence young adults' motivation to volunteer in intercultural youth work. The basis of this development project consisted of literature on volunteering and intercultural youth work and studies about volunteer motivation and young adult volunteers. The thesis gathered information about young adults' motivation to stay active as volunteers in intercultural youth work. In addition, it investigated whether young adults' education, age, cultural background or their knowledge of an organisation affect their motivation to start volunteering in intercultural youth work.

The subscriber of the study was StepEurope ry, an international youth organisation that offers local activities and international training to young adults. Young adult volunteers brainstorm, plan and implement activities with the support of StepEurope's employees. StepEurope aims to strengthen young people's participation, raise their awareness of cultural diversity and promote their possibilities for international experiences.

The development project was a case study that employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. A survey provided quantitative data. Semi-structured interviews and a community-based participatory workshop provided qualitative data. The survey was used to reach young adults living in the Turku area. The interviews were conducted with StepEurope's volunteers to receive a deeper understanding about their motivation to volunteer. The workshop provided StepEurope's volunteers and voluntary-based board the chance to participate in the study as a community.

The results of this thesis showed that the most likely young adults to volunteer in StepEurope's intercultural youth work are those who have participated in their activities, young adults with an immigrant background and those with higher levels of education. The motivation of StepEurope's volunteers is influenced mainly by the possibility to contribute to important issues while working together with like-minded people. In addition, they are motivated by the opportunity to develop skills, gain and share knowledge and have cultural exchange. The main barriers to volunteering are lack of time, the nature of some of StepEurope's activities, the small number of participants in activities and lack of a sense of community between volunteers. Gaining exposure and developing a clear image for the organisation would help StepEurope to recruit young adult volunteers.

The study resulted in a manual that offers concrete tips for young adults' volunteer recruitment and management in intercultural youth work. The manual is based on the results of the development project and earlier studies. The results of this thesis are meant for StepEurope's employees. They can be used by any organisation working in intercultural youth work and those recruiting and managing young adult volunteers.

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Keywords: volunteer work, motivation, interculturalism, multiculturalism, young adults

## TIIVISTELMÄ

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Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli tutkia, mitkä asiat vaikuttavat nuorten aikuisten motivaatioon tehdä vapaaehtoistyötä monikulttuurisessa nuorisotyössä. Kehittämistyön pohja muodostui vapaaehtoistyön ja monikulttuurisen nuorisotyön kirjallisuudesta. Tavoitteena oli tuottaa tietoa nuorten aikuisten vapaaehtoisten motivaatiosta toimia monikulttuurisessa nuorisotyössä. Lisäksi selvitettiin, vaikuttaako nuorten aikuisten koulutustaso, ikä, kulttuurinen tausta tai tuntemus organisaatiosta heidän motivaatioonsa aloittaa vapaaehtoistyö monikulttuurisessa nuorisotyössä.

Tilaaja oli StepEurope ry, joka on vuonna 2015 perustettu kansainvälinen nuorisoyhdistys. Yhdistys tarjoaa paikallista toimintaa Turussa sekä kansainvälisiä koulutuksia. Toiminta keskittyy nuoriin aikuisiin. Nuoret aikuiset vapaaehtoiset ideoivat, suunnittelevat ja toteuttavat toimintaa StepEurope:n työntekijöiden kanssa. Toiminnan tavoite on vahvistaa nuorten aikuisten osallisuutta, nostaa heidän tietoisuuttaan kulttuurisesta moninaisuudesta ja edistää heidän mahdollisuuksiaan kansainvälisiin kokemuksiin.

Kehittämistyössä käytettiin sekä laadullista että määrällistä tutkimusmenetelmää. Määrällisenä tutkimusmenetelmänä käytettiin kyselyä ja laadullisena menetelmänä käytettiin puoli-strukturoitua haastattelua ja ideointityöpajaa. Kyselyn avulla tavoitettiin Turun alueella asuvia nuoria aikuisia. Haastattelut toteutettiin StepEurope:n vapaaehtoisten kanssa. Työpaja oli yhteisöllinen menetelmä StepEurope:n vapaaehtoisille ja hallitukselle.

Aineiston pohjalta selvisi, että niitä nuoria aikuisia, jotka ovat eniten motivoituneita tekemään vapaaehtoistyötä StepEurope:ssä, ovat yhdistyksen toiminnan osallistujat sekä maahanmuuttajataustaiset tai korkeasti koulutetut nuoret aikuiset. StepEurope:n vapaaehtoisten motivaatiossa korostuu mahdollisuus vaikuttaa heille tärkeisiin yhteiskunnallisiin kysymyksiin yhdessä samanhenkisten ihmisten kanssa. Lisäksi heitä motivoi mahdollisuus kehittää taitoja, saada ja jakaa tietoa ja tutustua uusiin ihmisiin eri kulttuureista. Toiminnan pienet osallistujamäärät, vapaaehtoisten yhteisöllisyyden puute ja paikallisen toiminnan luonne tuovat haasteita vapaaehtoisten motivaatioon. StepEurope:n näkyvyyden lisääminen ja selkeän maineen kehittäminen edesauttaisi uusien vapaaehtoisten tavoittamista.

Kehittämistyön tulos on manuaali, joka antaa vinkkejä nuorten aikuisten rekrytoimiseksi vapaaehtoisiksi ja koordinoimiseksi aiempien tutkimuksien ja kehittämistyön tuloksien perusteella. Manuaali muodostuu tehtävälisteristä. Tulokset ovat tarkoitettuja StepEurope:n työntekijöille. Niitä voivat hyödyntää myös muut alan toimijat, jotka koordinoivat vapaaehtoistyötä monikulttuurisessa nuorisotyössä, ja niitä, jotka työskentelevät nuorten aikuisten vapaaehtoisten kanssa.

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Asiasanat: vapaaehtoistyö, motivaatio, kulttuurienvälisyys, monikulttuurisuus, nuoret aikuiset

## CONTENTS

### ABSTRACT

### TIIVISTELMÄ

1 INTRODUCTION.....	5
2 CASE STEPEUROPE RY.....	7
3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	9
3.1 Intercultural youth work.....	9
3.2 Volunteering .....	11
3.3 Motivation to volunteer .....	14
3.4 Young adult volunteers.....	17
4 RESEARCH METHODS.....	23
4.1 Survey.....	24
4.2 Semi-structured interviews .....	28
4.3 Workshop.....	31
4.4 Methods of analysis .....	33
5 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS .....	35
5.1 Young adults' motivation to volunteer in StepEurope .....	35
5.2 Reaching new young adult volunteers .....	40
5.3 Barriers to volunteering.....	47
5.4 Activities to increase motivation .....	49
6 END PRODUCT .....	52
6.1 A search tool with volunteers' interests, skills and networks .....	52
6.2 Practical tips for volunteer recruitment and management .....	53
7 SUMMARY .....	56
REFERENCES.....	59
APPENDICES.....	63

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Both in Finland and abroad, nongovernmental organisations rely on volunteers for much of their workload. Finland has a long tradition of volunteering as an integral part of social and welfare work. However, organisations notice that volunteering has undergone significant changes. Younger generations of volunteers are not committed to organisations and are specific about how and when they want to volunteer. They are motivated by unselfish reasons to volunteer but seek to benefit personally from volunteering as well. These changes form challenges for organisations. They must come up with new strategies to attract volunteers and keep active volunteers involved for longer periods of time. Recruiting volunteers takes resources that are often limited in small organisations. (European Union 2011.) Major reform to Finnish social and healthcare services brings even more uncertainty to the future of funding for organisations and their resources to recruit and manage volunteers (Koljonen 2017, Lohilahti 2018).

This thesis was commissioned by StepEurope ry, an international youth organisation based in Turku. StepEurope was founded in 2015 and is a volunteer-based organisation, creating opportunities for young adults, by young adults. (StepEurope ry 2018a.) An active group of volunteers is taking part in the planning and implementation of local activities and international training (StepEurope ry 2018b). The main language used in the activities is English. As StepEurope is still a young organisation, it is not well known among young adults living in the Turku area. As many youth organisations, StepEurope lacks sustainable funding and has limited resources for the recruitment of volunteers. The organisation needs to know what motivates their active volunteers, what could prevent them from volunteering and what could motivate them to stay active in the organisation. They also want to receive information about what could motivate the target group of young adults living in the Turku area to volunteer for the organisation. StepEurope will use the results of the study to develop their recruitment strategy and volunteer management. (Kankare 2018.)

Numerous studies on volunteer motivation have been conducted in Finland and abroad (Hyams 2012, Simon 2018, Hui & Tsan 2012, Yeung 2002). These studies will serve as a framework for this thesis while focusing on the specific age group of young adults between 18 and 35 years old in the field of intercultural youth work. The use of English and the intercultural aspect of the organisation give opportunities for further study. The objective of this thesis is to give StepEurope concrete tips that can help them to build a community of young adult volunteers. The main research question is: “Which factors influence young adults’ motivation to volunteer in StepEurope’s intercultural youth work?”

In this study I will use an online survey to try to find which groups of young adults are most likely to become volunteers in StepEurope’s intercultural youth work. In this way, I will attempt to determine if age, education, cultural background or knowledge about the organisation can influence young adults’ motivation to volunteer in StepEurope. The results may give the opportunity to focus StepEurope’s recruitment campaigns on certain target groups. (Hyams 2012, 12; O. Shields 2009, 143; Simon 2018, 106.) In addition, the survey offers an opportunity to find out how well-known StepEurope is among young adults in the Turku area. I will conduct semi-structured interviews with StepEurope’s volunteers to get a deeper understanding of what motivates them to volunteer, what could prevent them from volunteering and what could motivate them to stay active in the organisation. A workshop with StepEurope’s volunteers and the voluntary-based board will create a platform for the active members of the organisation to be heard and to develop ideas for future activities and projects as a community.

The product of my thesis will be a manual that gives the StepEurope team concrete tips for building a community of young adult volunteers. The manual will be based on earlier studies and the findings of this thesis. It will include tips for recruitment strategy and volunteer management. In addition, I will develop a search tool that can help StepEurope to quickly find which volunteers have certain interests, skills and networks.

## 2 CASE STEPEUROPE RY

StepEurope ry is an international youth organisation based in Turku. It was founded in 2015 by four young people from Finland who had participated together in an international training in the United Kingdom. During this training, the idea for the organisation was born. StepEurope aims to activate young adults and help them to develop their potential through international training, local activities and projects, and opportunities for volunteering and internship. Another goal of the organisation is to create an intercultural opening in youth work by raising young people's awareness of different cultures, fighting racism and promoting inclusion. (StepEurope ry 2018a.)

StepEurope has a voluntary-based board. The president of the board and the international coordinator live in the UK. The other board members reside in Finland. (Kankare 2018.) A group of active volunteers take part in the planning and implementing of local events and international training (StepEurope ry 2018b). The organisation's actions are funded mainly by the Finnish National Agency for Education's Erasmus + program, Veikkaus, the Arts Promotion Center Finland (Taike), and the City of Turku. To support the volunteers, StepEurope has hired its first paid employee as project assistant at the beginning of 2017. Later she became the project coordinator for the organisation. A second paid employee became project coordinator in the autumn of 2018. The first employee continued to be part of the organisation as the project manager. Young adults assist the paid employees and the board through internship and publicly funded work try-out. (Kankare 2018.)

StepEurope gives young adults the possibility to go abroad for weeklong international training and seminars through its international partners. In turn, their partners send young adults from abroad to take part in the international training StepEurope organises in the Turku area. (StepEurope ry 2018c.) The training is open to young adults who have reached the age of 18. The organisation has chosen this age limit to simplify the administration involved in international training. Underage youngsters would need

parental approval, and this involves a lot of paperwork. The local events have a more flexible age limit but attract mostly young adults between 18 and 35 years old. The main language used in the events is English. This offers a possibility for young adults with an immigrant background who speak English and have not learned the Finnish language well yet to meet new people, broaden their networks and use their own strengths and interests to create events according to their own unique interests. In addition, it gives young Finns the chance to practice speaking English in an international group of young adults.

The events are meant for young adult Finns and immigrants alike, creating a setting for intercultural communication and learning. The majority of StepEurope's participants and volunteers are young adults with an immigrant background. The organisation hopes to have more Finnish young adults as active participants and volunteers in the future. (Kankare 2018.) Bringing young adults with different backgrounds together, giving them the opportunity to create meaningful events and activities together can increase understanding, openness, connection, and community between different groups in society. Through their intercultural youth work, StepEurope aims to inspire young adults to play an active role in creating a more diverse and tolerant society. (StepEurope ry 2018a.)

As StepEurope is still a young organisation, it is not well known among young adults living in the Turku area. Like many organisations, StepEurope depends on its volunteers for the continuation of its activities. StepEurope has noticed that many of its young adult volunteers are active only for a while. Volunteer recruitment takes resources that are limited in the organisation. StepEurope hopes to increase volunteer retention by understanding what motivates their volunteers. In addition, they have a pressing need to recruit new volunteers, as the number of active volunteers is low. They often contact the same volunteers when they need help and believe this may have negative effects on the active volunteers' motivation in the end. They hope to receive a new strategy that could make recruitment campaigns more effective and attract new active volunteers. (Kankare 2018.)



### 3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I will discuss the literature and earlier studies that form the theoretical basis for this thesis. I will explain the concepts of intercultural youth work and volunteer work. I will investigate the historical, societal and political context of volunteer work in Finland. In addition, I will discuss findings of earlier studies on volunteer motivation and young adult volunteers.

#### 3.1 Intercultural youth work

Finnish youth work is based on the Finnish Youth Act that was renewed in the year 2017. The Youth Act's goal is to strengthen youth's social inclusion and participation. It aims to support independence, growth, a sense of community, the acquiring of knowledge and skills, and the pursuit of free time activities. In addition, it wants to promote non-discrimination and the realisation of civic rights while improving young people's growth and living conditions. The Act is based on the principles of solidarity, cultural diversity and internationality, sustainable development, healthy lifestyles, respect for life and the environment, and cross-sectoral cooperation. (Nuorisolaki (1285/2016).)

The core values behind the Youth Act acknowledge the need for an intercultural opening in youth work. In this thesis, I will define intercultural youth work as youth work that supports and guides social contact between young people from different cultural backgrounds. In addition, intercultural youth work includes efforts towards the enhancement of tolerance and non-discrimination. (Peltola 2010, 8.) Intercultural youth work believes that diversity enriches society. It recognises the reality of racism and

wants to create circumstances that support social harmony. Key elements of the intercultural approach to youth work are the need for collaboration, dialogue, active participation, understanding, and respect for all. (Peltola 2010, 24–25.)

The terms multicultural and intercultural are often used interchangeably. Where multiculturalism refers to the existence of different cultures within one community living next to each other, interculturalism emphasises the need for different cultural groups to engage with each other proactively. (Kastoryano 2018, 2–3.) Multicultural youth work is, in practice, often designed especially for immigrants. (Honkasalo, Souto & Suurpää 2007, 115–116; Peltola 2010, 8.) It has been criticised for being defined and planned too often by others than the young people it is meant for. As the opportunity for young people to participate in the planning and creation of activities is important in youth work, there is a need to involve young people with different cultural backgrounds in the planning of the activities that are meant for them. (Honkasalo et al. 2007, 115–116; Peltola 2010, 5–7.)

Getting Finnish youth to participate in multicultural activities has proven to be challenging. Projects that want to promote an intercultural approach may avoid using the term ‘multicultural’ to describe their activities. Even when the activities are open to young people with a Finnish background and an immigrant background alike, multicultural activities are often seen as meant for immigrants. (Honkasalo et al. 2007, 12.) This is in line with the experience of StepEurope. The organisation has noticed the need to make it clear to Finnish young adults that its activities are open to them as well (Kankare 2018).

To create an intercultural opening in youth work, each person involved should develop a mindset of positive and proactive relating to different cultural groups in their community. This includes the consideration of the availability of youth work to young people belonging to different cultural groups. This consideration should be included both in youth policy as in the everyday planning and implementation of youth work. (Peltola 2010, 24.) StepEurope wants to promote the availability of youth work for those young

adults who do not speak the Finnish language well yet. They achieve this by creating activities, international training, and opportunities for volunteering and internship where English is used as the main language of communication. (Kankare 2018.)

StepEurope's work includes many traits of an intercultural approach to youth work. Their activities and training promote intercultural communication, inclusion, and awareness of different cultures. They increase availability for certain groups of young adults by using English as their main language of communication. The core of their work is the opportunity for young adults to plan and implement their own projects and activities with the support of the StepEurope team. (StepEurope 2018a.) Attracting Finnish young adults to their activities remains a challenge. StepEurope hopes to reach more Finnish young adults when they gain more visibility and become well-known among young adults living in the Turku area. (Kankare 2018.)

### 3.2 Volunteering

StepEurope offers young adults the opportunity to volunteer in intercultural youth work. Volunteering has been a part of Finnish society for centuries. In this chapter, I will focus on volunteering in Finland. As an important part of StepEurope's volunteering happens within Finland, I will investigate the historical, social and political context in which it occurs. In addition, I will add some findings from international research as well.

A traditional, much-used definition of volunteering says that volunteering is an activity for the benefit of individuals and communities that does not receive financial compensation, that is done without obligation and is not considered as a duty of family or kinship (Laimio & Välimäki 2011, 9). In the context of the European Year of Volunteering in 2011, the European Commission defined volunteering in the following way: "Volun-

teering 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.” (European Commission 2011, 2.)

Civic activities and volunteering in its organised form have been part of Finnish society since the mid-1800s. The growth of volunteer work during that time was a response of the Finnish people to their need to develop society and strengthen their sense of a national identity. Volunteering experienced a setback at the beginning of the 20th century, influenced by the wars, but was revived after the Second World War. Volunteering was long seen as a supplement to the public services. In the 1960s it was believed to systematically disappear when the state-based social security system was established. The Finnish state took over some of the activities that had formerly been part of voluntary-based organisations. With the expansion of public services in the 1990s, volunteering was still mainly seen by the establishment as complementing the public services. It was not regarded as an independent sector. At the same time, the number of civic organisations grew and organisational structures and support mechanisms were developed to back them. Volunteering proved to have an important role in Finnish society and did not disappear as some expected. (European Union 2011, 2.)

The economic crisis in the mid-1990s resulted in budget cuts and the increased responsibility for municipalities to organise social and health services. This strengthened the role of volunteer-based organisations once more. Finnish citizens continued to believe in the welfare state, but volunteer-based organisations had become an important part of Finnish society. (European Union 2011, 2.) At the time this thesis is written, changes in the social and health sector in Finland cause concerns for the future of volunteer-based organisations. The responsibility for social and health services lies mainly with the municipalities and partly with the provinces as well. About 10 000 organisations are doing social and health work in Finland. About 90% of their welfare work is done by volunteers. Funding for the organisations will come mostly from municipalities. As far as the provinces are concerned, one percent of its funding is appointed to promoting well-being from the year 2022 onwards. However, provinces can choose to spend the money elsewhere. Until that time, funding from the provinces has not been appointed

at all for welfare work. According to Vertti Kiukas, secretary-general of the Finnish umbrella organisation of social and health organisations in Finland, in a worst-case scenario, volunteering could end. Especially small organisations risk a lack of funding. (Koljonen 2017.)

The European Commission's report on volunteering in 2011 mentioned this as one of the main challenges of volunteering in Europe. It noted that volunteering, even though given freely by the volunteer, does come at a cost for organisations. Organisations that depend heavily on volunteers often do not receive sustainable funding and the competition for available funds is strong. (European Commission 2011, 3; Hyams 2012, 11.) StepEurope is a small and young organisation that experiences this competition for funds and uses its limited resources to ensure the continuity of its activities. To achieve this, the StepEurope team is looking for new ways to make their volunteer recruitment effective and improve volunteer retention. (Kankare 2018.)

The European Commission (2011) identified more challenges and possible obstacles to volunteering. It explained that in almost one in five states within the European Union, there is a lack of sufficient legislation concerning volunteering. It noted as well that the skills that can be gained through volunteering often do not receive enough credit and recognition. In addition, there is a mismatch between the needs of new volunteers and those of organisations. Volunteers are looking for short-term projects where organisations need committed volunteers for longer periods of time. (European Commission 2011, 3; O. Shields 2009, 140.)

Finnish volunteering has been subjected to many changes. Volunteering in Finland has long been linked to membership to an organisation. "Talkoot" (an informal form of volunteering, meaning working together towards a communal goal for a certain period) and other informal ways of volunteering have been and are still popular as well. Although Finland still has a high number of volunteer-based organisations, the number of membership-based volunteers has dropped significantly. (European Union 2011, 2.)

Concerns are rising about the future of volunteering regarding this trend. Younger volunteers tend to be interested in project-based volunteering. They are more specific and outspoken about what they want to achieve from their voluntary work and often do not commit to organisations for a long period of time. This forms a challenge for organisations that must adapt to these changes and find new ways to recruit and manage volunteers. (O. Shields 2009, 140; European Union 2011, 2; Hyams 2012, 6.)

Many of these challenges are part of StepEurope's everyday work. Sustainable funding is missing, and the turnover of volunteers is high. Some volunteers have been active and are committed for a longer period. However, many volunteers become active when interested in specific activities and may stop volunteering when a certain project or training ends. StepEurope wants to find ways to increase volunteer retention. It is, however, clear to the organisation that it cannot always count on long-term commitments of their volunteers. Because of this, recruiting new volunteers is a priority and will likely stay a significant part of StepEurope's work. (Kankare 2018.) As resources are limited in terms of time and funding, StepEurope can benefit from improving its recruitment strategy, based on knowledge about young adult volunteers' motivations. (Hyams 2012, 12; O. Shields 2009, 143; Simon 2018, 106.)

### 3.3 Motivation to volunteer

Many studies have been conducted on what motivates people to volunteer. With a constant need for organisations to recruit new volunteers and increase volunteer retention, it can help to understand what makes the volunteering experience worthwhile. Organisations can do this by asking their volunteers what motivates them. In this way, the organisation can provide the volunteers with tasks they will happily perform. This can increase the satisfaction of the volunteering experience and strengthen volunteer retention. (O. Shields 2009, 142.) StepEurope wants to understand what motivates young adults in volunteering for their organisation, what could hinder their motivation and what could motivate them even more. As volunteer recruitment campaigns take

up resources that are limited within the organisation, StepEurope wants to learn new ways to keep currently active volunteers satisfied. They hope they can have volunteers commit to the organisation for a longer period. There is, however, also a need for the recruitment of new active volunteers. (Kankare 2018.) In that regard, asking a broader audience of young adults about what could motivate them to become active in the organisation could help to develop effective recruitment messages, based on their interests and motivations (Hyams 2012, 12; O. Shields 2009, 142; Simon 2018, 106).

A classic Finnish research on volunteer motivation was conducted by Professor Anne Birgitta Pessi (2004) of the University of Helsinki. The results of her research showed that 41% of Finnish volunteers were motivated by their wish to help others. Other factors were mentioned by less than 10% of the volunteers. From the less frequently mentioned motivations, being asked by a friend or acquaintance was the most common. Other motivations were the wish to meet new, like-minded people, getting new life experiences, learning new skills and a general interest in volunteering. Younger Finnish volunteers were motivated more by their wish to learn new skills in comparison to their older peers. They also started volunteering more often when influenced and inspired by their friends. Those Finnish volunteers over the age of 50 were motivated often by their wish to meet new people through volunteering. In addition, they emphasised their willingness to help others and their wish to have a steady routine, doing something useful. (Yeung 2004.)

Volunteer motivation has been studied from many different approaches. This thesis will use self-determination theory (SDT) as the framework for analysing volunteer motivation. This theory about the influence of self-determination on motivation focused originally on self-determination in learning and education. The definition of self-determination depends on the theoretical orientations it is used in. As a community educator, I will focus on self-determination as a construct for positive youth development. Here, self-determination means the capacity to think for oneself. Positive youth development aims to promote autonomy, independent thinking, self-advocacy, em-

powerment of young people and their ability to live according to their values and standards. This approach is in line with positive psychology and pedagogy, which highlights the support of human strengths. (Hui & Tsang 2012.)

Self-determination theory is based on the conviction that human beings have a natural tendency towards growth. They seek challenges and opportunities to gain knowledge and develop skills. The environment can have a positive or negative impact on this part of human nature. Self-determination theory states that growth, integrity, and well-being are a result of how well people's innate, basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are met. (Bidee, Vantilborg, Pepermans, Huybrechts, Willems, Jegers & Hofmans 2012, 35.) Autonomy points to the ability to choose one's actions and to behave according to one's own values and sense of identity. The need of relatedness is the need to belong and feel oneself as part of a social group. Competence is the ability to feel effective, to learn new skills and master tasks. (Hui & Tsang 2012.) Self-determination theory presumes that people will seek out and come back to those activities that fulfill those basic needs. Environments that support autonomy, competence and relatedness will thus strengthen self-determined motivation. (Bidee et al. 2012, 35.)

Self-determination theory is the framework for this thesis for two reasons. First, the innate needs of relatedness, autonomy and competence can be found in the main developmental tasks of young adulthood. According to developmental psychology, the developmental tasks of early adulthood are related to gaining independence from the childhood home (autonomy), developing professional skills and entering working life (competence), and learning to create meaningful relationships (relatedness) (Nurmi, Ahonen, Lyytinen H., Lyytinen P., Pulkkinen & Ruoppila 2010, 166). Secondly, the self-determination approach is in line with StepEurope's goals, to activate young people by encouraging autonomous choices in volunteering and giving them the opportunity to develop skills through creating activities and projects according to their own interests and values (StepEurope 2018b). Autonomy-supporting leadership encourages the initiative of volunteers, gives opportunities for choice, takes different views into account



and facilitates social interactions (Oostlander, Güntert & Wehner 2013, 1371). By incorporating these elements in its volunteer management, StepEurope creates a positive social environment that supports young adults' self-determinacy.

Some scholars have continued to develop self-determination theory and have added a fourth innate psychological need to it, the need for purpose. The need for purpose is defined as the need to contribute to something bigger than oneself. (Ackerman & Tran 2018.) This development project uses this adaptation of the theory for the analysis of its results. Earlier studies on volunteer motivation confirmed the influence of the need for purpose on the motivation of both young adults and other age groups (Hyams 2012, 26).

### 3.4 Young adult volunteers

This thesis focuses on young adult volunteers. In this chapter, I will talk about what earlier research reveals about what sets young adult volunteers apart from other age groups. In addition, I will explain what strategies have been recommended, relying on the earlier research, to target a young adult audience in volunteer recruitment and management.

Young adults represent the least active age group of volunteers in Finland as well as abroad (Kansalaisareena ry 2015; Hyams 2012, 16; Nylund & Yeung 2005, 18; Tisch 2011, 23). Finnish research shows, however, that from those Finnish citizens who do not volunteer regularly, those between 25 and 35 years old would be most willing to volunteer. This indicates that organisations could increase their efforts towards the recruitment of young adult volunteers. (Kansalaisareena ry 2015.)

Organisations can greatly benefit from recruiting young adult volunteers. In the future, they can become the organisation's leaders. In times where more social tasks are fulfilled by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), it is important to have a continuous flow of good NGO leaders. Young adults that gain experience in the work field as volunteers can become valuable leaders for organisations in the future. (Wituk, Warren, Heiny, Clark, Power and Meissen 2003, 76–86.)

A large majority (70%) of Finnish citizens believe that children and youngsters should be educated towards participation in volunteering as a part of the school system (Kansalaisareena ry 2015). This could positively influence their participation in volunteering during early adulthood. A study has shown that getting young people involved in volunteering during their transition into adulthood, increases their motivation to continue volunteering in later life. (Oesterle et al. 2004, 1144.)

Studies in volunteer motivation are numerous. Less research is available focusing on young adults' motivation to volunteer. Most of these studies intend to offer recommendations for recruitment strategies towards young adult volunteers, based on their specific motivations. (Hyams 2012, 12; O. Shields 2009, 143; Simon 2018, 106.) Research shows that young adults' motivation to volunteer is influenced by their wish to develop their existing traits of teamwork and cooperation, mentoring ability and acceptance of others (O. Shields 2009, 153). School enrollment is a significant factor influencing young people's tendency to volunteer. A study of persons aged 16 to 24 years old showed that enrollment in school almost doubled the rate of participation in volunteering. University is the place where many young adults are recruited for volunteering, as organisations target university campuses for their recruitment campaigns. (Hyams 2012, 22; Oesterle et al. 2004, 1128.)

The most frequently mentioned benefits of volunteering by young adults are getting experience, meeting new people and the joy of helping others. Other benefits of volunteering are related to personal development, such as developing communicative skills, social skills, raising self-esteem, enhancing employment opportunities, and gaining

awareness about important social issues and personal responsibility. (Marinela 2010, 106.) Research by Professor A.R. Hyams (2012) of the University of Minnesota concludes that young adult volunteers differ from other age groups in several areas. She confirms that young adults have stronger motivations related to career development and social capital than older adult volunteers. In addition, they share the same unselfish and social motivations as older volunteers. They are motivated both by their desire to contribute to society as their wish to benefit personally. (Hyams 2012, 26; Oesterle et al. 2004, 1128.)

Young adults' views on volunteering and possible prejudices can influence their motivation to volunteer. The main disadvantages of volunteering for young adults are the need to use personal resources, for example, to pay for transport and the need to give up personal free time. Another important negative factor is when one feels ignored or not appreciated enough by the organisation's staff. This can cause young adults to feel as a failure or as a disappointment. (Marinela 2010, 106.) Some young adults may see volunteering as boring and involving older people that may not appreciate their skills. Efforts could be made to change the image of volunteering towards young adults and make it look more socially and personally attractive to them. (Hankinson & Rochester 2005, 93–105.)

A Finnish study determined that the most important reasons young adults do not participate in volunteering are a lack of time and not having been asked to volunteer (Kansalaisareena ry 2015.) Another study showed that the most common barriers to volunteering are a lack of time (43,4%), a lack of interest (27,1%) and health problems (14%). Other barriers are a lack of financial resources, a lack of child care, a lack of transportation, low self-esteem, negative perceptions of volunteering, and cultural or language barriers. (Sundeen, Raskoff & Garcia 2007, 282.) Hyams's (2012, 50) research found the main barriers were a lack of time, not knowing about the organisation and how to start volunteering there, and a lack of relevance for the person. The research also showed a clear differentiation between the age groups in terms of concern about lacking the right skills to volunteer. This was of significantly more concern to young adult volunteers than to volunteers of older age groups.

To attract young adults with busy lives, organisations could create concrete packages of tasks and advertise them in their recruitment campaigns. They could offer packages with tasks that take little time and others that take up more time. Some packages could involve tasks that don't ask for a lot of responsibility, others could be more demanding. Creating fun names for the packages, including a clear task description and the amount of time a volunteer will spend can make it easier for interested young adults to start volunteering. (Karreinen, Halonen & Tennilä 2010, 9–15.)

Different studies confirm that young adults are not very committed to a certain organisation, are choosy about their tasks and expect to benefit personally from volunteering. (O. Shields 2009, 140; European Union 2011, 2). Volunteer retention is, however, an important goal for organisations that have limited resources to invest in labor-intensive volunteer recruitment. A variety of factors are said to influence young adult volunteer retention. Unselfish reasons for volunteering seem to correlate positively with successful volunteer retention. (Marta & Pozzi 2008, 44; Hyams 2012, 15.) Being mentored as a volunteer by other volunteers can have positive effects on retention as well. Mentored volunteers are often willing to mentor others and will be more content with their volunteering experience. Mentoring becomes in this way a positive cycle for organisations. (Hyams 2012, 15.)

A study revealed that young people seek connections with young adults older than themselves for a mentor-like, nonparental relationship. About half of the respondents in the study stated that they would like to have a young adult mentor. Working collaboratively with other volunteers has positive effects on retention as well. (Hyams 2012, 15.) Young adults will, on the other hand, be likely to quit if they are not impressed or do not feel engaged with the organisation they volunteer for. The esteem of an organisation is important in the choice of young adults to volunteer. They tend to volunteer for organisations that are familiar to them and have a good reputation. Another important factor influencing their choice is the coherence of the organisation's image with their self-image. Young adults tend to volunteer for organisations that reflect how they want to be seen by others. (Hyams 2012, 24.)

To gain exposure and develop a reputation, organisations can use a combination of strategies. Young organisations can get increased exposure by creating events in collaboration with organisations that are well-known and have a good reputation. Taking part in street events on days that celebrate important issues related to the mission of the organisation can increase visibility to a broader audience. (Karreinen et al. 2010, 26–27.)

Certain traits have been associated with young adults that are most likely to volunteer. Research shows that volunteers often have increased levels of education (Hyams 2012, 13; Tisch 2011, 24). This is also confirmed by the experiences of StepEurope (Kankare 2018). In addition, the higher university students' grade point average (GPA), the more likely they want to volunteer in the future. Those most likely to volunteer in the future also have higher interests in teamwork and mentoring. Common motivations to volunteer of students with high GPA are related to opportunities to interact with friendly staff and befriend other volunteers. Almost as commonly reported is the motivation to enhance their personal and professional skills by volunteering in a nonprofit organisation. Organisations may benefit from targeting higher educated young adults in their recruitment campaigns. Efficient recruitment messages should be aligned with the most common motivations of those young adults who are most likely to volunteer. (O. Shields 2009, 139–141.) To serve StepEurope's needs in volunteer recruitment and management, further study of the specific motivations of young adults likely to volunteer in intercultural youth work could be beneficial to explore.

In my study, I will include young adults between the ages of 18 and 35. As a community educator focusing on youth work, it could have made sense to focus on young adults between 18 to 29 years old. This would include those young adults that fall under the Finnish Youth Act. I chose to broaden this age group and include all young adults between the ages of 18 and 35. This has two reasons. Firstly, almost all StepEurope's volunteers are young adults. For this study, it was important to get information from them about their motivation to volunteer in intercultural youth work. As some of the active volunteers are between the age of 30 and 35, it is important for the study to include them. Secondly, young adulthood is defined differently in literature in terms of age.

Looking at early adulthood from the perspective of developmental psychology, this period in one's life includes certain developmental tasks. Some of the main developmental tasks related to early adulthood are leaving the parental home, getting an education, transitioning into working life and starting a family. (Nurmi et al. 2010, 166; Arnett 2000.) Researchers find that chronological age does not have as much meaning for development during early adulthood than for example in childhood. Unusual life events like immigration have as much effect on development as age and the historical time one lives in. (Nurmi et al. 2010, 166–169.)

Most of StepEurope's volunteers have an immigrant background and have moved to Finland during their youth or early adulthood (Kankare 2018). Moving to a new country causes young adults to orient themselves again in life. They have the tasks of learning a new language, often learning a new profession. It takes time to develop relationships with people in the country they have moved to. Language is barrier that can cause loneliness and isolation in the first years after moving to a new country. A combination of these factors can cause the fact that it takes longer for immigrants to complete the developmental stages of young adulthood. (Nurmi, Ahonen, Lyytinen, Lyytinen, Pulkkinen & Ruoppila 2010, 169.) For the purpose of this thesis, I will thus consider those participants of the study that are between the ages of 18 and 35 years old as young adults.

## 4 RESEARCH METHODS

In this chapter, I will discuss the research strategy and the research methods used in my thesis. The development project started off with determining the research question. This was done in cooperation with StepEurope. I chose the case study as my research strategy. A case study is a research strategy, in which one seeks to obtain an in-depth understanding of a particular situation. It narrows down broader fields of research into one specific topic that is currently relevant in society and studies it in its own environment. The aim of a case study is to provide recommendations for development. (Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti 2015, 52.) This research strategy is suitable for my development project, as I want to get a deeper understanding of what motivates young adults to volunteer in the intercultural youth work that StepEurope provides. As a result of the case study, I will offer suggestions for the further development of their volunteer management and recruitment.

Case studies rely on earlier studies, theories, and methods (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 53). After determining the research question and strategy, the study concentrated on literature on intercultural youth work and volunteering and earlier studies on young adult volunteers and volunteer motivation. The earlier studies provided methods to collect data on the focused topic of young adult volunteers' motivation in intercultural youth work. I chose those methods of data collection and analysis that would give me the most appropriate information about the object of my study. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 40.) I continued by collecting and analysing the data through my chosen methods. After that, I used the information obtained from the data as well as from the earlier studies on the topic to create the end product of my thesis.

A case study can make use of a variety of methods. Different methods of gathering data can support and complement each other, giving a comprehensive view of the topic.

(Svensson 2005, 267.) For this thesis, I chose to use semi-structured interviews, a survey, and a participatory workshop as my methods for data collection. For the qualitative data analysis, I used transcription, coding, categorization, and collecting categories into themes. I analysed the quantitative data of the survey with the Webropol tool, using filtering, cross-tabulating, and charts to make the results visible and compare results of different subgroups.

#### 4.1 Survey

My first method was an online survey. The main aim of the survey was to reach young adults living in the Turku area that had not yet participated in StepEurope's activities. The survey could provide information from this target audience about what could motivate them to participate and volunteer in StepEurope's activities. Attracting new participants and volunteers is an important goal for StepEurope. The online survey seemed to be the most effective method to reach as many young adults as possible from different cultural, socio-economic and educational backgrounds.

The survey was purposely designed to attract young adult respondents who are interested in international and intercultural youth work. The title of the survey was: "Young adult, are you interested in international experiences?" I avoided using the term volunteering in the social media post and survey title, to make the survey as low threshold as possible. Asking those who may never have heard about StepEurope if they want to participate in a survey about volunteering for the organisation seemed like a way to scare people off. The goal of the social media post was to awaken their interest in the organisation. In this way, the survey would receive answers from those who have an interest in the kinds of activities StepEurope provides.

The survey contained questions that ask about interest in participation as well as in volunteering. I had in mind, that all active members of an organisation are possible



future volunteers (Sakaduski 2013, 23). Many of StepEurope's volunteers start with a general interest in the organisation and become volunteers once they get to know the organisation. (Kankare 2018.) By attracting young adults that are interested in the organisation in a more general way, StepEurope may very likely attract new volunteers in the long run. For this reason, I added questions in the survey that referred to participation in StepEurope's activities as well as questions that pointed to volunteering. To answer my research question, I analysed those questions of the survey that provided information about what aspects influence young adults' motivation to volunteer in StepEurope. The survey had a marketing function, letting many young adults know about the organisation while asking them about their interests towards StepEurope's activities and volunteer work.

The survey took five to ten minutes to complete. To make the survey more attractive, a prize draw was connected to it. The prizes offered were two sets of movie tickets. After completing the survey, respondents were redirected automatically to a contact information form where they could participate in the prize draw. The form was made separately from the survey to ensure the respondents' anonymity. The survey was open between May 11 and June 1st, 2018. It was launched during the 'Kaupunkikarnevaalit' event in Turku. StepEurope participated in the event with an information table in the central hall of the shopping Center Hansa, in the center of Turku. During the event, people could come and get information about StepEurope. I participated in the event as an intern for StepEurope. The StepEurope team promoted the survey during the event. People could answer the survey from a tablet or a laptop.

I shared and promoted the survey in various ways with the help of StepEurope, friends and acquaintances. We shared it on StepEurope's website and in its monthly newsletter. I made a poster and hung it up in different locations in Turku. The survey was shared extensively on Facebook and Instagram. I shared the survey in several Facebook groups, which I thought would attract respondents from different backgrounds within the target audience. Some of my friends and members of StepEurope shared the survey on their own profiles. A paid add ran on Instagram and Facebook for four days. The add was targeted to young adults between and 18 and 35 years old, living in the Turku

area. The add reached 1002 people. The add received 170 responses, meaning that 170 people clicked, commented or shared the post. With the add, I hoped to heighten the chances of attracting respondents from different backgrounds. The survey was completed by 102 respondents.

The survey contained closed and open questions. The closed questions provided quantitative data. Quantitative methods are often used to test out theories (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 104). With the closed questions, I aimed to test out theories based on earlier studies as well as StepEurope's experiences. A section of the survey was available only to those who had expressed that they had already participated in StepEurope's events. This section included open questions, providing qualitative data. Qualitative methods are frequently used to get new information and a deeper understanding about a topic. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 105.) The open questions provided data on the respondents' motivation to participate, what would motivate them even more and what could prevent their participation.

The survey aimed to test out a few theories. Its goal was to find out whether young adults are motivated by 'selfish' reasons rather than unselfish reasons to volunteer in intercultural youth work. In addition, it could test out whether young adults with a higher education are more likely motivated to volunteer in intercultural youth work. It could offer information about the motivation of Finnish young adults in comparison to that of adults with an immigrant background. It could confirm or falsify the idea that Finnish young adults are less motivated to volunteer in intercultural youth work than their peers with an immigrant background. In addition, it could give clues about what interests them most in the international experiences StepEurope offers. The idea behind this was, that StepEurope could attract Finnish young adults as well as those with an immigrant background with those activities that would interest them most. By attracting them to participate they may become volunteers after getting to know the organisation better.

Another question I could get an answer to through the survey was how well known StepEurope was among young adults living in the Turku area. Knowledge about young adults' acquaintance with StepEurope can help the organisation to develop its recruitment efforts and strategy. In addition, this question could test out the theory that young adults' willingness to volunteer is influenced by their acquaintance with an organisation, as earlier studies suggest (Hyams 2012, 24).

The survey started with questions related to demographics and the respondents' knowledge about StepEurope. This made it possible to compare subgroups in the analysis of the survey. Those respondents who did not know StepEurope could not have known what volunteering in the organisation meant on a practical level. To be able to ask the respondents if they would be interested in volunteering for StepEurope, the questions explain the different aspects of volunteering for the organisation. First, the survey asks if the respondent would like to participate in the brainstorming and planning of interesting activities, together with other young adults. Secondly, it asks if the respondent would like to participate in the implementation of interesting events, together with other young adults.

A weakness of the online survey as a research method is the fact that it is impossible to know who the respondents really are. Even though I made efforts to attract a diverse sample within the target audience, I had no control over who completed the survey. Anyone could have participated and answered what they wanted, in the hope of winning movie tickets or for any other reason. Without the guaranty of a representative sample of the target audience, it is not possible to generalize results. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 129-130.) It should be noted that I intentionally wanted to attract young adults that had an interest in international and intercultural youth work to complete the survey. The reason for this was, that I wanted to know about their interests to volunteer. I had no use for respondents who would have no interests in intercultural youth work.

After completing the survey and doing a few interviews, I noticed that I could have added a question to the survey about earlier international experiences. This came up

in the interviews as a significant factor in motivation to volunteer. It would have been interesting to know the correlation between the respondents' previous international experiences and their motivation to participate and volunteer in intercultural youth work.

#### 4.2 Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interview is a qualitative research method. It follows themes and related questions that are thought out beforehand (Hyvärinen 2017, 55). In semi-structured interviews, the chosen themes and related questions are based on earlier studies and theories concerning the topic of the research (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001, 66). The results from the survey have influenced the interviews as well. The interviews offered the opportunity to receive more extensive information on findings from the survey. The order and wording of the questions in a semi-structured theme interview may vary. A benefit of this kind of interview is the possibility to ask questions that arise during the interview because of the respondents' answers. These questions may offer a deepened understanding of the topic. (Tuomi ja Sarajärvi 2018, 126.) With the interviews, I aimed to get a deeper understanding of the experiences and motivation of StepEurope's currently or previously active volunteers.

The interviews were conducted with 6 volunteers. Three volunteers had a Finnish background and 3 others had an immigrant background. I chose volunteers that had been actively involved in the organisation for a longer period as well as new active volunteers. At the request of StepEurope, I interviewed a possible future volunteer as well, someone with extensive experience in volunteering in intercultural organisations. Another volunteer was someone who had been formerly active and had not been active for a while. By choosing these interviewees, I aimed to get a deeper understanding about the motivations from volunteers from different backgrounds and with different ties to the organisation. The

The interviews were held in Logomo Byrå, where most of the volunteer work takes place. Using this location for the interview was beneficial because it could help the interviewee to relate the questions to the experiences they had while volunteering in that same place. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 106-107.) A separate room was organised for the interview to ensure to the possibility to talk privately. I offered tea or coffee and a small sweet treat to the interviewees during the interview.

Before the interview, I explained the purpose of the interview to the interviewee, stressed their anonymity and recorded their permission for the interview. As the interview was semi-structured, I had prepared questions around themes within the topic of volunteer motivation. I started the interview with a few questions about the background of the volunteers and their involvement in StepEurope. Then I asked them about what had motivated them to start volunteering in StepEurope. The questions about their motivation to volunteer were based on the earlier studies and the knowledge and experiences of StepEurope. Self-determination theory as used in previous studies on volunteer motivation formed the theoretical backbone of the interview. For one question, I asked the respondents to choose statements about volunteer motivation that affected their motivation the most. They could choose themselves how many statements they chose. I asked them to explain why those factors affected their motivation. In addition, I asked them how these factors had been realised in their volunteering in StepEurope. The statements pointed to the different basic needs within the self-determination theory.

Statements about relatedness:

I can belong to a group of like-minded people.

I can meet new people.

I can expand my international networks. (statement for Finnish respondents)

I can integrate into Finnish society. (statement for respondents with an immigrant background)

Statements about competence:

I can learn new skills.

I can practice speaking English.

I can develop my cv.

Statements about autonomy:

I can choose when and how often I participate.

I can choose how I participate.

I can realise my own ideas.

Statements about purpose:

I can contribute to important issues.

I can create activities for others.

I can give back to the community.

The semi-structured interview focuses on the experience of the respondent. It was my aim to offer a lot of space for the respondents to tell freely about their experience. The interview could also help the volunteer to feel heard and valued, what may motivate him or her to volunteer in the future as well. The interview as a research method relies on communication between the interviewer and the respondent. Creating trust between them is needed. The interviewer must always let the respondent know about the purpose and anonymity of the interview. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 108.)

The risk of the interview as a qualitative research method is the possibility that the volunteer answers in a socially correct manner that is not completely according to his or her experience (Honkasalo 2005, 144). I, therefore, created a one-on-one interview setting to enhance privacy and minimize peer pressure to answer in a certain way. I aimed to make the volunteer feel valued and attempted to create a relaxed and open

atmosphere for the interview. I had a short, casual chat before the interview to help make the respondent feel relaxed and to ease into the more formal part of the interview. The anonymity of the answers in the analysis and publication of the research was stressed as well. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 108.)

In retrospect, I would have liked to ask the interviewees if important statements were missing after I let them choose between the 12 statements related to motivations. I feel that it would have given them the opportunity to think and share aspects of their motivation that I may not have thought of. I, however, asked them about their motivation to volunteer in different ways before letting them choose the statements. I did this deliberately to hear what motivations they would mention themselves first. Some new themes that I had not included in the statements came forward through those earlier questions. The statements were meant to make them think about different aspects of their motivation. They had the chance to freely elaborate on their experience of them.

### 4.3 Workshop

The participatory workshop was a communal method, activating StepEurope's volunteers and volunteer-based board to participate in the development project as a community. Communal participatory methods can create new points of view, ideas, and solutions from within the organisation. (Ojasalo 2015, 158-159.) The workshop gave the possibility for everyone to be seen and heard in what was important for them individually and work together to create ideas in a fun and creative way. The goal of the workshop was to gather ideas for activities and projects as well as the development of current ones, based on what would motivate the volunteers.

Seventeen young adults took part in the workshop. The participants were StepEurope's active volunteers, volunteer-based board and a few members of the organisation. I started the workshop by explaining the goal and the program outline of the workshop.

I told the participants how volunteers are an important resource for the organisation. I explained how the organisation was built between the members together, creating activities and projects that the volunteers are passionate about. StepEurope wants to listen to their volunteers. They want to know what skills the volunteers have, which skills they want to use in their volunteering and what wishes they have for their volunteering. As a young organisation, the networks of the volunteers could prove to be very valuable as well to develop more cooperation between organisations and create more visibility in the work field.

After the welcoming words and explanation, I aimed to create a fun and relaxed atmosphere for the workshop with a pillow-race icebreaker game. For the actual workshop, the participants received a colorful paper foot, hand and heart. I asked them to think about what skills they had and to write down those skills they would like to use in their volunteering for StepEurope. I stressed that this was completely voluntary. If they wanted, they could write their name on the backside of the paper. I explained that it could be beneficial for StepEurope to know which volunteer had certain skills, but they were free to keep their contribution anonymous as well.

On the paper hand they were asked to write about the contacts and networks they had and would like to use in their volunteering for StepEurope. The paper heart was used to write down their wishes about what activities or projects StepEurope could develop and the role they would like to have in it. After the individual writing, the participants were divided into groups of three or four. Each participant had five minutes each to tell about their skills, networks and wishes to the others in their group. After that, they combined all that to create an idea for a new activity or project, or the development of a current one. I gave them a big sheet of paper to write and/or draw on. To help them make a concrete plan, the paper had the following words on it for them to plan around: what, why, for whom, when/for how long, where, who will do/partners. The last part of the workshop was a sharing of the new ideas to the whole group of participants and some comments and discussion. A collage was made on the wall with all the participants' paper feet, hands and hearts (see appendix 3).



The idea of the workshop was inspired by the guide: “Creativity: an art and cultural education method guide for intercultural youth work” (Soininen 2011). The activity ‘a collage of my experience’ includes the drawing and cutting out of paper feet, hands and hearts. On the foot, participants write down their background and past experiences. On the hand, they write what they would like to do or experience. On the heart, they write what interests and excites them. The participants share what they have written down in the group. Afterward a circle shaped collage is made, with the hearts in the middle, the hands around them and the feet on the outside. (Soininen 2011, 10.) I created the workshop around this idea of collecting participants’ experiences and wishes in a creative way and adapted it to the goals of my workshop.

The possible risk of a communal method like this workshop is peer pressure. A participant could have written down and shared things in the group they may not really be ready to do. After reviewing the individual writings, I noticed that a few participants had not understood every part of the exercise correctly. I had aimed to speak very clearly with enough volume and with easy vocabulary. I had asked as well if everything was clear. Even though, some might have been distracted or misunderstood the task.

#### 4.4 Methods of analysis

I analysed the results of each method separately and combined the results later where possible. I started by analysing the survey, as I thought this would give me information that I could investigate further in the semi-structured interviews. The Webropol online tool helped me to analyse the quantitative data of the survey. Since the survey had a Finnish and an English version, I had linked both versions in Webropol when designing the survey. I combined the reports to be able to analyse them as one survey. I was able to use the Webropol filter tool to create reports of subgroups of the respondents, based on either demographic characteristics or other variables, like their ties to the organisation. To make comparison between subgroups possible, I extracted the data

from each subgroup to Excel-files and used the data to create cross-tables and bar-charts.

I started the analysis of the interviews with a transcription, a writing down of the interviews word-for-word. I color-coded the data through labeling relevant words, phrases, and expressions. After that, I sorted the coded data into categories and combined the categories into themes. I created a mind map of each theme and the categories connected to it. I tagged the interviewees in the mind maps, using abbreviations (I1, I2, etc.), connecting them to those categories they had talked about. This allowed me to see how many times expressions in certain themes were mentioned. I included all the categories that were mentioned at least twice in the results.

I analysed the results of the workshop through coding the data into categories and combining categories into themes. I wrote down the specific ideas from the workshops about future activities and projects as part of the product of my thesis. For those volunteers who gave permission, I added the information about their wishes, skills and networks to the volunteer search tool that is part of the product of my thesis as well.

## 5 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I will discuss the combined results of the research methods. I will discuss the results of the data from the semi-structured interviews, the survey and the workshop in themes. The themes are determined both by the earlier studies and by additional themes that appeared in the results of this study.

### 5.1 Young adults' motivation to volunteer in StepEurope

In this subchapter, I will show which factors influence the motivation of StepEurope's volunteers. The results are based on the semi-structured interviews, the workshop and the survey. Self-determination theory formed the basis of the division of the results into themes.

#### **Finding a community**

The first theme that came forward through the interviews I conducted with 6 volunteers, is the young adults' wish to find a community through volunteering in StepEurope. (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, I6) This is closely related for them to the international character of the organisation. The volunteers are particularly looking for an international community where they can have cultural exchange (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, I6). The interviewees with an immigrant background feel at ease in an international group of young adults. They all confirm the importance of English spoken activities for them as an opportunity to meet new people (I4, I5, I6). Some mention that through volunteering in StepEurope they do not feel alone, even when they do not speak the Finnish language well yet (I4, I6.) They feel that volunteering in StepEurope gives them opportunities for integration through meeting young adults with a Finnish background (I4,

I5, I6). The interviewees with a Finnish background have all had international experiences before volunteering in StepEurope. They like to meet new people with an international background through volunteering in StepEurope (I1, I2, I3).

For the interviewees, finding a community means belonging to a group of like-minded people. When explaining what this means to them, they all share that this is related to having common interests and the wish to work together towards contributing to important issues. (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, I6.)

“You can meet deep people with whom you can talk about everything... good conversation, build something important together and create something nice together.” (I6)

All interviewees who are or have been active volunteers for StepEurope share that they have found like-minded people through volunteering in StepEurope and that this motivates them in their volunteering. (I1, I3, I4, I5, I6.) Some also mention that the warm and open atmosphere created by the StepEurope team motivates them in their volunteering (I1, I4.). However, most of the volunteers experience a lack of community as some events attract a very small number of participants and volunteers (I3, I4, I5, I6). When looking at this from the perspective of self-determination theory, this indicates that the volunteers’ innate need for relatedness is not met in their volunteering for StepEurope. Some explain that the lack of active participants can be due to the variety of activities. As volunteers are free to create their own activities, they tend to be active for those activities that interest them and stay away for many others. In the workshop, 2 participants mentioned their wish for more active volunteers. Finding common topics of interest for those volunteers who have been active for a longer period and gather regularly around those topics could be a good way to keep them motivated and active within the organisation. (I1, I3, I4, I5, I6).

All interviewees with an immigrant background stressed the importance of the English language used in their volunteering as a possibility to meet like-minded people (I4, I5, I6). This was in line with findings from the survey. The survey asked respondents about

the meaning of the English language for their participation in free-time activities. The 44 young adult respondents with an immigrant background had all moved to Finland from abroad during their youth or young adulthood. Among them, 24 had lived in Finland for less than four years. Of this group, 14 answered that activities held in English meant the only possibility for them to participate in free-time activities. For another six of them, activities held in English meant a significant advantage because they could not express themselves well in Finnish. In addition, out of the 20 young adults who had lived in Finland for four years or more, nine said that activities held in English were their only possibility to participate. For seven of them, it meant a significant advantage. This indicates that youth work where the English language is used to communicate can offer opportunities for participation and the finding of a community to a significant number of young immigrants while they learn the Finnish language.

### **Gaining competence**

The interviewees all shared the motivation to learn new skills and gain knowledge through volunteering (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, I6). According to the interviewees, StepEurope gives them good opportunities to develop skills, from organising events (I1, I3), facilitating groups (I1, I4, I5, I6), writing funding applications (I3, I4, I6), to learning social skills adjusted to Finnish culture (I4, I5). They want to share knowledge between young adults from different cultures (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, I6) and want to gain knowledge about working in organisations (I1, I3, I5, I6) and important issues in society (I1, I2, I3, I5, I6). Some mentioned the motivation to develop professional networks to help their career move forward (I2, I3, I6). Without asking for it specifically, 5 out of 6 interviewees shared that volunteering for StepEurope has developed their self-confidence (I1, I2, I4, I5, I6). According to these results, the volunteers' need for competence as described in self-determination theory, is met well.

During the workshop, the volunteers shared which skills and what knowledge they wanted to use in their volunteering. Five volunteers mentioned professional skills related to community education and youth work. Six volunteers wanted to share their knowledge about important issues, including diversity, migration and human rights.

Three others talked about skills relating to organising international training. Nine volunteers wanted to use their marketing skills in their volunteering and 8 volunteers mentioned skills related to organising and facilitating activities. Those skills included facilitating energizers, singing, dancing, cooking, art, yoga and mindfulness. These results show that the volunteers have a wide range of skills and knowledge they want to use in their volunteering. StepEurope can use the search tool that is part of the product of this thesis to look for volunteers with specific skills. Both earlier studies and the results of this thesis confirm that volunteers want to share their knowledge and skills in their volunteering (Hankinson & Rochester 2005, 93–105).

### **Contributing to important issues**

All the interviewees chose motivations related to contributing as one of the factors that motivate them the most to volunteer. Four out of six interviewees chose either ‘I can contribute to important issues’ (I2, I3) or ‘I can give back to the community’ (I4, I5) as their most significant motivation to volunteer. Within the theme of purpose as used in self-determination theory, the phrases the volunteers expressed the most were related to contributing to important issues. When describing important issues, they mentioned migration, diversity, inclusion (I2, I3, I4, I5, I6) and sustainability (I3, I6). Those interviewees who talked about giving back to the community explained it in the same terms they used when talking about contributing to important issues. They want to share their knowledge and experience as young adults with an immigrant background to open the minds and hearts of Finnish people around issues of diversity and inclusion (I4, I5). Four interviewees mentioned that the opportunity to create activities for others motivated them to volunteer. (I1, I3, I5, I6). Most of them talked about their willingness to help and do good for others (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5).

The need for purpose seems a significant factor in young adults’ motivation to volunteer in StepEurope. StepEurope’s volunteers all agree that they have been able to contribute to important issues and give back to the community through volunteering in StepEurope (I1, I3, I4, I5, I6). Two of the interviewees said explicitly that they only want to volunteer and spend their free-time when they feel they can really contribute to important issues. (I2, I6) As, in addition to them, three other interviewees (I3, I4,

I5) chose the opportunity to contribute as their most important motivation to volunteer, this indicates the emphasis of this aspect in the young adult volunteers' motivation to volunteer in StepEurope. Many of the interviewees expressed their wish for a bigger and more active community to create and work together towards important issues (I3, I4, I5, I6).

### **Making autonomous choices**

StepEurope's volunteers get the chance to create activities, events, and projects based on their own unique interests and ideas. They can choose what kind of activities to volunteer for, and when and how often to volunteer. The opportunity to make autonomous choices regarding volunteering influences some volunteers more than others. The ability to choose when and how to participate in volunteering was mentioned by two of the interviewees as one of the important aspects influencing their motivation to volunteer (I2, I4). In the course of the interviews, however, two of those who had not chosen this aspect as a significant influence on their motivation revealed that the choice when and how often to volunteer was, in their view, a basic trait of volunteering (I1, I3). Many shared that they need the freedom to choose when they volunteer because of their busy and/or changing life situations (I1, I3, I4, I5).

The opportunity to realise one's own ideas was chosen by one interviewee as a significant influence on their motivation to volunteer (I3). This was surprising to me at first, as this opportunity is an important basis for participation and is at the core of StepEurope's youth work. Most of the interviewees talked about creating events when they shared about their volunteering in StepEurope and what motivates them to volunteer. While talking about this, they emphasised their wish to create events together with a group of like-minded people (I1, I3, I4, I5, I6). Maybe this can explain why only one chose 'realising my own ideas' as a significant motivation, as they seem to prefer the 'we' aspect of creating new events and projects. Earlier research on young adults' motivation to volunteer showed similar findings. It concluded that the opportunity to work together increased the retention rates of young adult volunteers within organisations. (Hyams 2012,15.)

Most of the interviewees emphasise that StepEurope gives them very good opportunities for autonomous choice (I1, I3, I4, I5, I6). They share the fact that the StepEurope team is open, understanding and approachable. When asking what StepEurope can do to motivate volunteers, one interviewee shared:

*I think it's their persona itself that is like that. If they are approachable you can bounce ideas off of each other... because I was here at the very first meeting where we were discussing the Restaurant Day and everything. And I shared some ideas there. And I was kind of surprised because I thought... It was my first meeting. So, I didn't expect any of my ideas to be accepted (laughs). Maybe they'll just think I'm a newbie and just shun me off. But that didn't happen, and I could put some out there. And then Ronja and Elias they were like, ok, let's hear more about it and they seemed interested and some of them were like, ok let's do this. I think the whole persona and approachability of the interns and the board members itself makes you want to do it.*

(I4.)

The large variety of activities StepEurope organises is, according to the interviewees, both a strength and a weakness of the organisation. The opportunity to choose which activities to volunteer for can cause some volunteers to be active only in certain activities that happen only a few times a year. According to the interviewees, the nature of the activities influences young adults' motivation to volunteer significantly. (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, I6).

## 5.2 Reaching new young adult volunteers

This subchapter shows the results and analysis of the quantitative data of the survey, as this information covers one distinctive part of the research question. The survey was made to receive information about the interest in international and intercultural youth



work of young adults living in the Turku area. The meaning was to find out whether young adults' age, education, cultural background or knowledge about StepEurope influences their motivation to start volunteering for the organisation.

The survey was completed by 102 respondents. The demographic questions of the survey showed that 66% of all respondents were between 24 and 32 years old. Most respondents were female (77%), resided in Turku (82%) and were highly educated (69%). I asked the mother tongue of the respondents to determine their cultural background. A little more than half of the respondents (55%) had a Finnish background and a little less than half (44%) had an immigrant background. Of those respondents with an immigrant background, 65% had lived in Finland between two and five years. Almost half of the respondents (46%) had never heard about StepEurope, 25% had heard about the organisation but had not participated in its events. Another 26% had participated in StepEurope's events. The survey was advertised in a way that would attract people who are interested in intercultural and international youth work. In this context, the results indicate that a typical young adult, interested in StepEurope ry's activities would be a highly educated female between 24 and 32 years old, who lives in Turku. In addition, the results indicate that StepEurope is not well-known among young adults living in the Turku area. This confirms the need for StepEurope to focus efforts on gaining exposure.

To analyse the respondents' interest in volunteering in StepEurope ry's intercultural youth work, I divided the respondents into subgroups according to their ties to the organisation, their cultural and educational background, and their age. Figure 1 shows how the subgroups responded to the statement about their interest in the brainstorming and planning of activities.

I would like to participate in the brainstorming and planning of interesting activities together with other young adults.

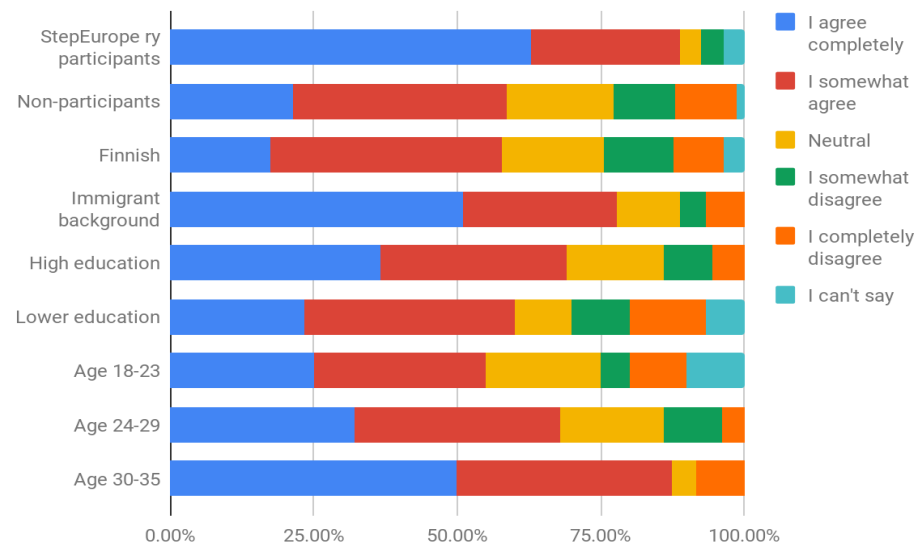


Figure 1. The first division in subgroups for the interest in brainstorming and planning

The division in these subgroups showed that StepEurope's participants scored highly on their interest in the brainstorming and planning of events. More than 60% completely agreed with the statement, and 89% of them at least somewhat agreed. Those respondents who had not participated in StepEurope's events scored much lower. About 20% completely agreed. Most of the non-participants answered in mild statements, which resulted in a score of 59% for all those who at least somewhat agree. Finnish respondents had the lowest score (12.5%) in terms of agreeing completely. Many of them somewhat agree, giving them a total score of 58% for those who at least somewhat agree. About half (51%) of all respondents with an immigrant background completely agreed that they would like to participate in the planning and brainstorming of events. This significant difference with respondents with a Finnish background made me look further into these two groups. From those participants with an immigrant background, about half had already participated in events, the other half had never heard of StepEurope. Half of the 57 Finnish respondents had never heard about StepEurope and only eight had participated in events. The fact that most of the Finnish respondents had never participated in events can explain their milder interest. I decided to make new subgroups of Finnish respondents and those with an immigrant

background based on their participation in StepEurope to see if this could give new insights. I will come back to this later.

Interest in the brainstorming and planning of events seemed to increase with each age group as young adults become older. Half of the respondents between 30 and 35 years old completely agreed. When investigating the age groups more closely, I discovered that 10 out of the 27 respondents of the age group between 30 and 35 were participants of StepEurope's events. After noticing the high score of StepEurope's participants, I decided to divide the age groups into participants and non-participants to discover possible new insights.

There was a significant difference in the interest of those respondents with a higher education (university or polytechnic degree) than those with a lower degree. This is in line with findings from earlier studies on young adult volunteers (Hyams 2012, 13; Tisch 2011, 24). I discovered that 30% of those respondents with a higher education were StepEurope's participants and 70% of them were non-participants. I decided to look further into this division and see if there would be a difference in interest as well when comparing non-participants by education.

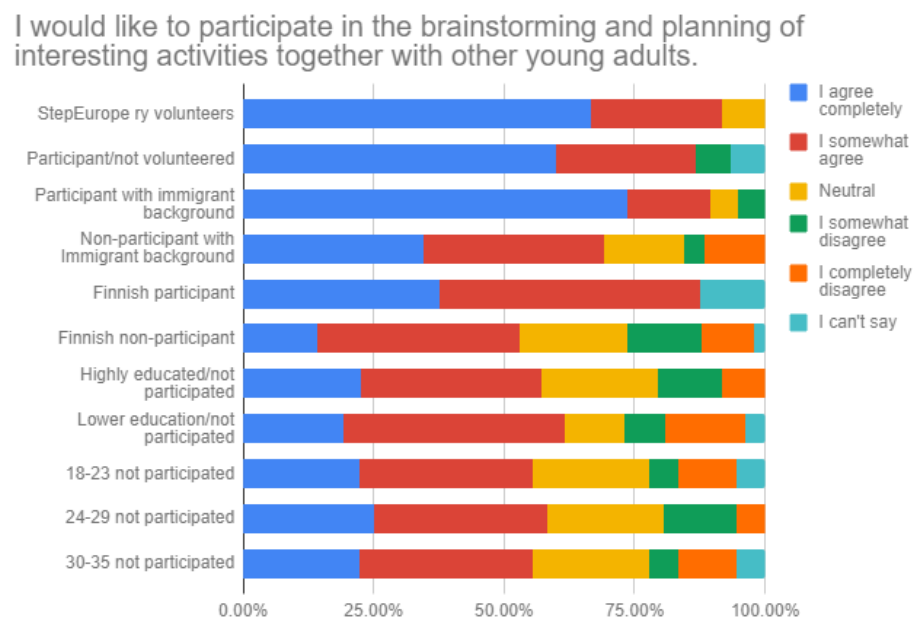


Figure 2. A second division in subgroups

A division in new subgroups revealed new findings as seen in Figure 2. First, the age groups did not show any significant difference in interest when looking at those respondents who had not participated in StepEurope's events. The differences I noticed in the age groups with the earlier division had been due to the number of StepEurope's participants in each age group. Interesting to note is the fact that StepEurope's participants belong to the older age groups of young adults. Seventy percent of them are between 27 and 32 years old. When looking at the age of young adults answering the survey, I noticed that most of the respondents belong to older age groups.

The survey was purposely advertised to young adults between 18 and 35 and a paid add was targeted to those same ages. Even though I cannot be sure, I made efforts to attract young adults of the different age groups equally. Even though the number of respondents is too small and the sample of the target group too random to generalize on a wide scale, these results indicate that more young adults of the older age groups are interested in StepEurope's intercultural youth work. If StepEurope has limited resources for the recruitment of new volunteers, it could try to focus a recruitment campaign at those older age groups of young adults to discover the effectivity of this strategy. The results of the new subgroups showed that StepEurope's participants with an immigrant background scored the highest in their interest in the brainstorming and planning of activities. 74% of them agreed completely and 16% somewhat agreed. They are followed by those who had volunteered for StepEurope. Their high score was not surprising, since most of them have already participated in the brainstorming and planning of activities. It is, however, possible, that some volunteers have an outspoken interest in implementing activities rather than planning them. I will look into this aspect of volunteering later on. StepEurope's participants who have not yet done volunteering for the organisation scored high as well. Sixty percent of them completely agreed and 27% somewhat agreed. This indicates, that recruiting volunteers from those participants who have not yet volunteered could be well worth it.

Somewhat surprisingly, only 37% of Finnish participants agreed completely and 50% somewhat agreed. Even though many of them chose a milder statement of interest, they scored much higher than Finnish respondents who had not participated in events.

Finnish non-participants had the lowest score in all subgroups, with 14% of them agreeing completely and 39% somewhat agreeing. When comparing Finnish non-participants with non-participants with an immigrant background, there is a clear difference in interest. Thirty-five percent of non-participants with an immigrant background completely agreed and another 35% somewhat agreed. The biggest part of Finnish respondents gave milder answers of interest overall. I first assumed that this might be due to many of them being non-participants, but even those who have participated are milder in their statements of interest than their peers with an immigrant background. The question arises, is there a difference in interest? It may also be interesting to see if Finnish respondents show more interest in the implementing of activities rather than the planning of them. Or might there be a difference in the way Finnish people express their interest? Could they be more careful in their expressions?

These results show that young adults with an immigrant background can be a good target group for volunteer recruitment. Some recruitment campaigns can be targeted towards them and their specific interests. Those Finnish respondents who have never participated are less outspokenly interested, but more than half of them is at least somewhat interested in brainstorming and planning of activities. As earlier research shows, those who have gotten to know an organisation through participating in events, are more likely to become volunteers after they become acquainted with the organisation (Sakaduski 2013, 23). As young adults are more likely to volunteer for organisations that are familiar to them, the fact that the organisation is unknown to them can also affect their mild interest. This confirms the need for StepEurope to make efforts towards more visibility and the strengthening of its reputation among young adults living in the Turku area. The organisation can attract young Finnish adults as participants first, based on their interests.

Dividing the subgroup of non-participants into those with higher and lower education revealed that those with a higher education scored only a little higher in terms of agreeing completely (22%) than those with lower education (19%). When including both those who completely and somewhat agreed, the non-participants with a lower education scored a little higher (61%) than their peers with a higher education (57%) Earlier

research, as well as the experiences of StepEurope, have stated that highly educated young adults are more interested in volunteering than those with lower levels of education (Hyams 2012, 13; Kankare 2018; Tisch 2011, 24). Apart from the scores of non-participants, it is worth noting that 71 of the 102 respondents of the survey were highly educated. Of those 26 respondents that had participated in StepEurope's events, 22 were highly educated. These numbers may indicate that, even though non-participants with high and low education levels score evenly in terms of interest in volunteering, there is more interest in StepEurope's international and intercultural youth work among highly educated young adults. Non-participants have answered with milder statements of interested compared to participants overall across the survey. The number of respondents in the survey is too small to make generalization possible on a wide scale. With earlier research, StepEurope's experiences and the number of highly educated respondents in mind, it could be worth it for StepEurope to focus a recruitment campaign on young adults with a high education to test its effectiveness.

I would like to participate in the implementation of interesting activities together with other young adults.

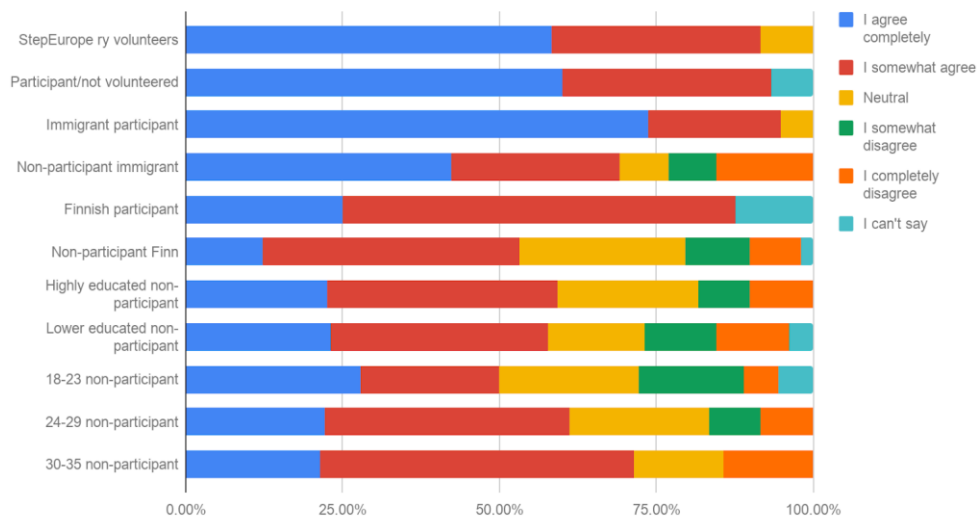


Figure 3. Interest in the implementation of activities

The next question asked about young adults' interest in participating in the implementation of interesting activities, together with other young adults (figure 3). The results show the same lines in the comparison between different subgroups. I had originally

made a similar chart based on the same subgroups as seen in figure 1 and noticed the same trends there as with the question about brainstorming and planning. As this chart did not offer new insights, I decided to focus on the analysis using the subgroups based on participation.

The results reveal that in broad lines the same differences between subgroups apply as with the question about brainstorming and planning. StepEurope's participants with an immigrant background were the most outspokenly interested subgroup. Small differences are, for example, the fact that the participants who have not yet volunteered for StepEurope seemed to be even a little more interested in the implementation of activities than those who have already volunteered. This is a strong indicator that StepEurope could benefit from asking their participants to help them with smaller or bigger tasks concerning the implementation of activities.

Finnish participants were less interested in the implementation of events than they were in the brainstorming and planning. Only 25% completely agreed, but when including milder statements of interested, 87 % of them were at least somewhat interested in participating in the implementation of events. Levels of education did not show significant differences in this question. Milder interest increased step-by-step in the older age groups of non-participants.

### 5.3 Barriers to volunteering

In this subchapter, I will discuss the results about the most common barriers for young adults to volunteer in StepEurope's intercultural youth work. The results are based on the qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews and the survey. Where possible, I compare the results with findings from earlier studies on young adult volunteers.

The most commonly expressed barrier to volunteering by the interviewees was a lack of free-time (I1, I3, I4, I5). This result was in line with the findings of earlier studies on young adults' motivation to volunteer. (Kansalaisareena 2015; Sundeen et al. 2007, 282; Hyams 2012, 50.) Getting busy with work or studies, as well as changing life situations like moving to another city or starting a family were mentioned by all interviewees as factors that prevent them from volunteering. (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, I6). Two interviewees said that the location of the activities prevented them from being active more regularly (I1, I4). Two other interviewees shared that those young adults that are interested in volunteering may already be involvement in other organisations and have no time left to become active volunteers for StepEurope (I2, I3). This confirms what earlier studies say about the competition between organisations for active volunteers (Hyams 2012, 11; European Union 2011, 3).

The volunteering in StepEurope is based on participation and the opportunity for young adults to create activities and projects. This specific characteristic gives young adults opportunities but causes a barrier to volunteering as well. The nature of activities StepEurope organises has a significant influence on the volunteers' involvement. Three interviewees shared that, even though they think that the opportunity to create is great and is StepEurope's strength, the large variety of activities contributes to the lack of community the volunteers experience. Volunteers join those activities they are interested in. Depending on their interests, they may feel drawn to participate just a few times a year. (I3, I4, I6.) Others become active because they are interested in a certain project, and become inactive afterwards (I3, I6, Kankare 2018). Two interviewees shared that the low number of participants and volunteers in some events has a negative effect on their motivation to volunteer (I3, I4, I6.) According to the interviewees, regular opportunities for volunteers to gather and connect could improve their motivation to volunteer (I2, I3, I4, I5, I6).

Four volunteers explained that the lack of community can cause a barrier for new volunteers to join as well (I1, I3, I4, I6). One volunteer shared: "When you search Facebook you can find StepEurope there. But if they find that there are events and there are a few people who went there so maybe I do not know if I want to go there or not. Or if



I'm able to find people there who I get along with or not." (I4) According to all the interviewees, StepEurope could attract new young adult volunteers by focusing on getting exposure and creating a name for itself. According to them, not many young adults living in the Turku area know about StepEurope. (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, I6). This was confirmed by the results of the survey. About half of the 102 respondents of the survey had never heard about StepEurope and another 10% had heard the name but had no idea what the organisation was about. Earlier research confirms that young adults are attracted to organisations they know well and that have a good reputation (Hyams 2012, 24). The need for exposure and the development of a clear image and reputation for the organisation could be well worth the effort if StepEurope wants to attract new active volunteers.

Three of the interviewees believe that many Finnish young adults are held back from volunteering in StepEurope because of their shyness to speak English (I1, I3, I5). A few interviewees have experienced that their friends showed no interest in the activities of the organisation when they invited them to come along. This lack of interest was due to the international nature of the organisation or the fact that the activities sounded somewhat too serious and formal. (I1, I5.)

#### 5.4 Activities to increase motivation

In this subchapter, I will discuss the results related to the activities that influence young adult's motivation to volunteer in StepEurope's intercultural youth work. I will combine the results of the workshop with those of the semi-structured interviews. Two of the interviewees participated also in the workshop. In the results, I combine the answers they gave in the interview and in the workshop. I make sure not to count them as two persons in the results and count them as one participant in the workshop. I will mention the answers from those interviewees who did not participate in the workshop separately.

The semi-structured interviews showed that the nature of the activities StepEurope organises influences the motivation of its volunteers (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, I6). The opportunity to work together towards contributing to important issues increases motivation to stay active in the organisation (I3, I4, I5, I6). These factors made me decide to organise a workshop for the volunteers and the voluntary-based board of StepEurope to create and develop ideas about projects and activities together as a community. During the workshop, the volunteers wrote down their wishes for something StepEurope could develop. Of all 17 participants, 14 participants shared wishes related to specific activities. In addition, 3 interviewees who did not participate in the workshop shared wishes about activities as well. This confirms that StepEurope's volunteers are motivated by the nature of the activities the organisation offers.

Eight participants and 3 interviewees mentioned wishes about activities related to the theme of migration and diversity. Within this theme, 7 of them described activities that include cultural exchange, 4 of them mentioned migration and diversity in a general way, and 4 of them talked about activities to support integration of young adult immigrants into Finnish society. Five participants and two interviewees shared wishes for activities related to sustainable development and nature. Five of them talked about developing the already existing gardening project and 2 others mentioned nature protection and sustainable development. Wishes related to international training were mentioned by 7 participants and 2 interviewees. Three of them wished for more opportunities to participate in international training. Four others talked about being part of organising an international training and another 2 mentioned international training without further explanation.

The remaining wishes about activities were mentioned by one or two participants each. One participant of the workshop and one interviewee wished to volunteer in activities related to sports. One participant expressed the wish for game nights and one wanted to facilitate mindfulness classes as a volunteer. Evenings with presentations about different topics of expertise were mentioned by 2 participants of the workshop and 2 interviewees.

In small groups, the participants of the workshop developed concrete ideas and plans for activities and projects. The ideas were related to integration of young adults with an immigrant background into Finnish society, encouraging Finnish young adults to join StepEurope through organising events where Finnish and English conversation is used, and developing the gardening project into a more extensive project about sustainable development. In addition, the participants developed ideas for regular events for cultural exchange with presentations and conversations about important topics and action-packed modules with sports, cooking and other activities.

These results show that the most common themes for activities and projects that motivate StepEurope's volunteers are related to diversity and migration, intercultural exchange, sustainability and nature, and international training. As the results of the semi-structured interviews showed, StepEurope's volunteers want to work together to create meaningful activities and projects. To increase a sense of community, the StepEurope team could contact the volunteers who are interested in the most commonly mentioned themes and ask them to participate in the planning and implementation of regular events around these themes.

## 6 END PRODUCT

In this chapter I will explain the end product of the thesis. The product consists of two parts. The first part is a search tool that holds information about StepEurope's volunteers. The second part is a plan with concrete tips on how to attract new volunteers and keep currently active volunteers active in the organisation. I made the product based on the earlier research on young adults' motivation to volunteer and the findings of my own study.

### 6.1 A search tool with volunteers' interests, skills and networks

I developed the search tool to make it possible for StepEurope to find information quickly about which volunteers have certain interests, skills and networks. The information is based on the interviews, workshop and StepEurope's earlier information gathered about their volunteers. The search tool is made as an Excel-file. It holds information about individual volunteers' interests, wishes, skills and networks. In addition, it includes information about their educational background and their involvement in the organisation. The search tool is part of the volunteer database that is protected by StepEurope's Privacy Policy and is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation.

The tool is designed to make it easy for the StepEurope team to search which volunteers have certain skills. When they are in need of volunteers for specific tasks, they can use the tool to find who is skilled in updating websites, or who knows many ice breaking games. They may also want to find who has connections to certain organisations or other actors when planning collaborative events. When a volunteer comes up with an idea for an activity or project, the team can find if other volunteers have showed similar

interests. In this way, StepEurope can bring interested volunteers together to create new activities together.

Asking volunteers for their interests can increase their motivation to volunteer when this information can be used in practice in StepEurope's plans for future activities and projects. To make this possible, the StepEurope can collect the information in the search tool to keep it easily accessible at any time. StepEurope can update the search tool every time they have conducted an interview with a new volunteer or whenever significant information can be added.

## 6.2 Practical tips for volunteer recruitment and management

StepEurope wanted to receive a plan with concrete tips for their volunteer recruitment and management. The plan is a manual that can help StepEurope's employees, interns and board to plan and implement their volunteer recruitment and management. The manual includes the chapters: creating visibility and reputation, reaching new volunteers, getting interested young adults involved, practical tips to strengthen community, roadblocks and pitfalls, and activities to build community.

The visual layout was developed with the help of StepEurope's input and feedback. The organisation wanted to get the information in a visually clear way. To be practical, they need to be able to access the information quickly for inspiration whenever working on a specific task. I wrote the concrete tips down concisely and used bold fonts to highlight the main points. This makes the manual user-friendly, making it easy to find the necessary information on each page. The chapters of the manuals consist of checklists that can be used when working on a specific task. The manual can be printed as a booklet or can be printed as separate pages. As many organisations struggle with a lack of active volunteers, the results of this thesis can be beneficial for many organisations, especially those working with young adults and those in the field of intercultural youth

work. In discussion with StepEurope, I developed the manual in a way that would make it practical to use for other organisations as well. The manual will be available to download from StepEurope's website.

The themes of the manual were based on the findings of earlier studies and the results of this thesis. The results of both earlier studies and this thesis confirmed that the knowledge young adults have about an organisation influences their likeliness to volunteer for the organisation. To help organisations build their community of young adult volunteers, the manual offers concrete tips to increase their visibility and build their reputation. The concrete tips are based on literature on volunteer recruitment and management and the ideas of StepEurope's young adult volunteers and voluntary-based board.

Reaching new volunteers is a priority for many organisations. The manual gives tips for recruitment messaging and recruitment campaigns focused on certain groups of young adults. Literature on young adult volunteers and the results of the survey of this study showed which subgroups of young adults are most likely to volunteer in intercultural youth work. This information can help organisations to focus recruitment campaigns on those young adults that are most likely to volunteer. In addition, the results of this thesis about what motivates young adults to volunteer in intercultural youth work can be used to advertise the possibilities of volunteering in recruitment messages.

To help interested young adults become active volunteers, the manual includes tips on how to create a connection with new volunteers and welcome them to an organisation. In addition, the manual offers tips that can help strengthen the sense of community and belonging of young adult volunteers. This is relevant, since the results of this thesis show that young adults look for a community through volunteering in intercultural youth work. The tips are based on literature, the wishes of StepEurope's volunteers and some practices StepEurope already uses in their volunteer recruitment.

One chapter of the manual focuses on the main barriers for young adults to volunteer in intercultural youth work. For each barrier, the manual gives tips on how to overcome those barriers. The barriers and tips are based on both the results of this thesis, earlier studies on young adult volunteers and literature on volunteer management.

The results of this thesis showed the importance of the nature of activities in young adults' motivation to volunteer in intercultural youth work. The last chapter of the manual offers tips on how activities can help to build a community of young adult volunteers. The information in this chapter is based on the results of this thesis.



Picture 1. The cover and table of contents of the manual

The StepEurope team has shared that the end product is very valuable to them. It includes many new insights and confirms ideas they already had but haven't put into practice yet. It is practical, easy to understand, and visually clear. The concrete tips can easily be put into practice. The organisation stressed the possibilities for other organisations to benefit from the product as well.

## 7 SUMMARY

I started off my study with the question: “Which factors influence young adults’ motivation to volunteer in StepEurope's intercultural youth work?” Earlier studies had found that young adults’ volunteering is influenced by both unselfish and egoistic motivations. They are not committed to organisations for a long period of time and are outspoken about what they expect to get out of their volunteer experience. The opportunity to work together has a positive effect on the retention rates of young volunteers. The most common barrier to volunteering for them is a lack of time.

I used self-determination theory as a base for the methods of my study. In the results of the study, I could easily categorize the young adults' motivation within the themes relates to the innate needs for relatedness, autonomy, competence and purpose. The survey gave me insights in the most likely subgroups of young adults to volunteer for StepEurope in the future. The clearest result was the fact that those young adults who have participated in StepEurope's events but have not volunteered in the organisation are very interested in volunteering for them in the future. This indicates that efforts to recruit volunteers from within the group of active participants could be well worth it.

Earlier studies and StepEurope's own experience show that young adults with higher levels of education are more likely to become volunteers. This showed in the results of this study most clearly in the fact that most respondents were young adults with a high education even though the survey was marketed online to a wide audience of young adults. In addition, most of StepEurope’s volunteers are highly educated.

The interviews revealed that StepEurope's volunteers are looking for a community of like-minded people through their volunteering. The opportunity to work together to contribute to important issues is for most of them the main factor that influences their



motivation to volunteer. For the interviewees, the issues are related to migration, diversity, and sustainable development. The volunteers agree that StepEurope gives them great opportunities to meet like-minded people, learn new skills, make autonomous choices about when and how to volunteer and create events and projects according to their unique interests. They are positive about the approachability of the StepEurope team and their openness towards new ideas. These factors all influence the volunteers' motivation to stay active in the organisation.

In line with findings from earlier research on young adult volunteers, the study confirmed that the main barrier to volunteering is a lack of time. The lack of community within the group of volunteers and the low number of participants in some events are the most significant factors that can demotivate the volunteers. In addition, the nature of the activities makes them decide when to volunteer. They believe that this is a significant reason why some volunteers are active only a few times a year and others stay away after the end of a certain project.

To increase a sense of community for the active volunteers, StepEurope could organise regular events around the central themes of diversity and sustainability, giving the opportunity for learning and sharing knowledge. Including time for conversation and getting to know each other can increase a sense of community among the volunteers and participants. Making time to sit down with volunteers before and after an event could create a routine where the StepEurope team can connect with the volunteers, thank them, affirm them in their contribution and receive feedback about the event and their volunteering experience.

According to the interviewees, the use of the English language could hold back many Finnish young adults from volunteering in StepEurope. The workshop created an idea for some activities where the Finnish language is spoken. This may attract new Finnish volunteers. Creating a recruitment campaign featuring Finnish volunteers could make it clear for young adults that StepEurope is open to Finnish young adults and young adults with an immigrant background alike.

To create a growing community of volunteers, StepEurope could focus efforts on gaining more exposure and creating a clear image of their organisation in their recruitment campaigns. Both earlier studies and the participants in the study confirm that young adults tend to volunteer for organisations that are well-known and have a good reputation. StepEurope could order a thesis to develop a communication plan. To gain exposure, they could ask for collaboration with Humak University of Applied Sciences to create a street event with students on a day that celebrates important issues that are at the core of the organisation.

The StepEurope team can use the results and the product of this thesis to build their community of young adult volunteers by developing their recruitment strategy and volunteer management. The manual can be part of the orientation package for new employees and interns. The volunteer search tool can be used when the StepEurope team wants to find volunteers with certain skills, networks or interests. To build on the results of this thesis, I could create a Finnish version of the manual in cooperation with StepEurope. I could offer to present the manual and the findings of my study to interested organisations. The results and product of this thesis can benefit many organisations working with young adult volunteers or those working in intercultural youth work. In a time when volunteering is changing and organisations need new strategies for volunteer recruitment and management, the practical guidelines of the manual can be useful to many organisations that struggle with a lack of active volunteers.

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## INTERVIEWS

*All the interviews were conducted by Iantje De Paepe.*

Interviewee 1 (I1). Volunteer. 6.5.2018, Turku

Interviewee 2 (I2). Volunteer. 27.6.2018, Turku

Interviewee 3 (I3). Volunteer. 13.9.2018, Turku

Interviewee 4 (I4). Volunteer. 30.9.2018, Turku

Interviewee 5 (I5). Volunteer. 15.10.2018, Turku

Interviewee 6 (I6). Volunteer. 22.10.2018, Turku

Kankare, Ronja. StepEurope ry. 6.9.2018, Turku.

## APPENDICES

## Appendix 1. Online survey



**INTERNET SURVEY FOR THE DETERMINATION OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES**

Are you between 18 and 35 years old? We want to hear your opinion! Our questionnaire takes about 5 minutes to answer and gives you a chance to win movie tickets!

StepEurope ry wants to learn more about the interest in international experiences of young adults living in the Turku area. The questionnaire is part of a thesis ordered by StepEurope ry. The answers will be saved anonymously and will be used only by StepEurope ry to develop its activities.

After answering the questions you will be directed to a separate contact form through which you can participate in the lottery.

Every answer is valuable to us! Thank you for taking the time!

The questionnaire will be open until 1.6.2018. If you have any questions, you can contact us by email to [ianthe.de-paepe@humak.fi](mailto:ianthe.de-paepe@humak.fi).

Your age \*

17 or younger

18-20

21-23

24-26

27-29

30-32

33-35

36 or older

I prefer not to say

40% completed

Your gender \*

Female

Male

Other

I prefer not to say

Your place of residence \*

Turku

Other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

Your education \*

Choose your highest level of education completed. (Finnish between brackets)

Comprehensive education (peruskoulu)

General upper secondary education (lukio)

Upper secondary vocational education (amattikoulutus)

Vocational adult education (ammatillinen aikuiskoulutus)

General and vocational upper secondary education (kaksisoistutkinto)

Polytechnic degree (amattikorkeakoulu)

University degree (yliopisto)

Other (please specify)

I prefer not to say

Your mother tongue \*

Finnish

Swedish

Other

20% completed

How long have you lived in Finland?  
(only for those who answered 'Other' as mother tongue)

Choose the right option from the dropdown menu.

I was born in Finland.

More than 10 years

6-10 years

4-5 years

2-3 years

1 year

Less than 1 year

Other (please specify)

40% completed

Are you employed, unemployed, studying,...? \*

You can choose more than one option.

Full-time employed

Part-time employed

Studying

Unemployed

On child-care leave or other leave

Other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

I prefer not to say

How well do you know StepEurope ry? \*

Choose one option.

I have participated in StepEurope ry's activities.

I haven't participated in StepEurope ry's activities, but I have heard about what activities they organize.

I have heard about StepEurope ry but I haven't heard about what activities they organize.

I haven't heard about StepEurope ry before.

Other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

60% completed

How did you participate in StepEurope ry's activities?  
You can choose more than one option.

I participated in their local activities.

I participated in an international training.

I am/was a volunteer.

I am/was a member.

I am/was a member of the board.

I did an internship or work try-out.

Other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

How many times did you participate in StepEurope ry's activities during 2018?  
If you don't remember exactly, choose the option you guess is the right one.

0

1-3

4-6

7-10

+10

What motivates you to participate in StepEurope ry's activities?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What could prevent your participation in StepEurope ry's activities?

---



---

What would make you even more excited to participate in StepEurope ry's activities?

---



---

80% completed

English spoken free-time activities mean to me... \*

Choose one option.

- the only possibility to participate. I don't speak enough Finnish to participate in Finnish spoken activities.
- a significant advantage. I can express myself better in English.
- a possibility to practice the English language.
- a significant challenge. I can't express myself well in English.
- an obstacle to participation. I don't speak enough English to participate in English spoken activities.
- The language doesn't effect my participation.
- Other (please specify)

---

What do you think about the following statements? \*

	Completely agree.	Somewhat agree.	Neutral.	Somewhat disagree.	Completely disagree.	I can't say.
I would like to participate in English spoken free-time activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to meet new people from different countries.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to participate in a week-long, free of charge international training. (travel and accomodation also free of charge)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to do volunteering abroad.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to participate in the brainstorming and planning of interesting activities together with other young adults.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to participate in the implementation of interesting activities together with other young adults.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What kind of free-time activities for young adults are needed more in Turku?

---

Would you like to tell us something more?

---

100% completed



## Appendix 2. Outline for the semi-structured interviews

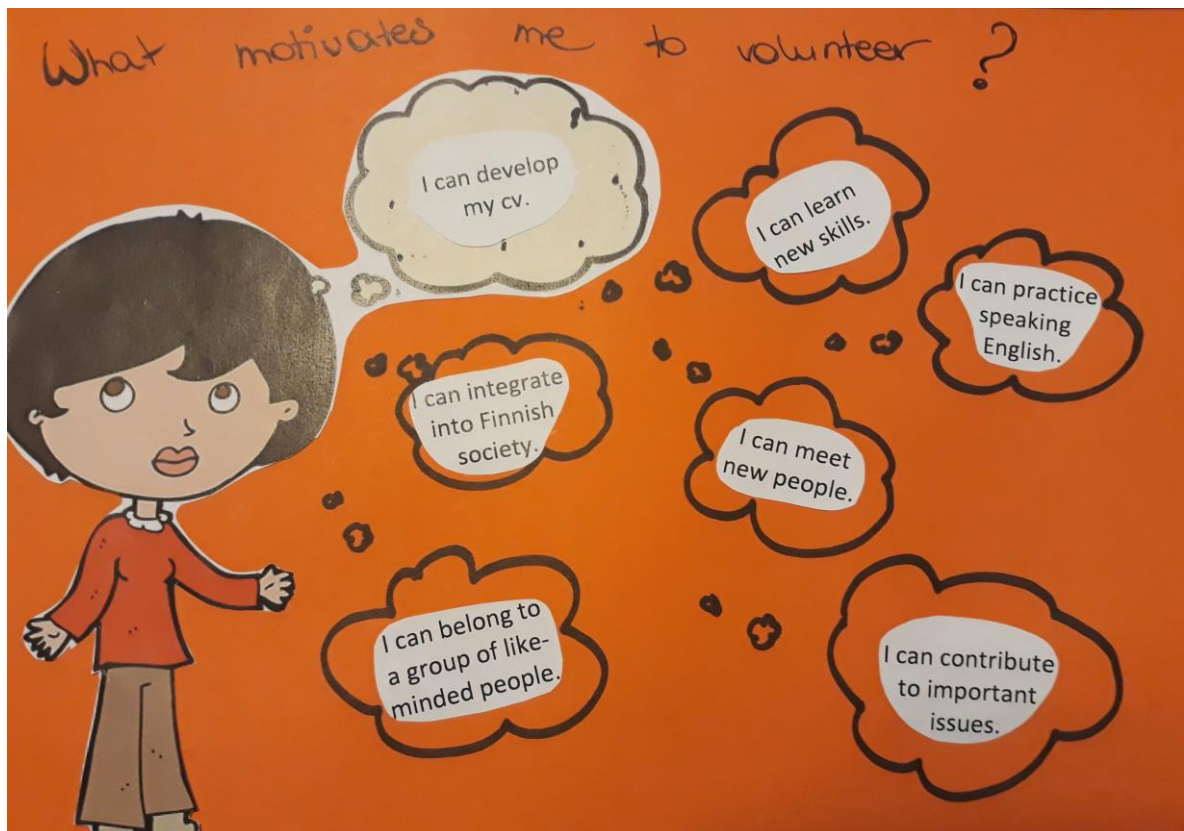
### INTERVIEWS WITH STEPEUROPE'S VOLUNTEERS

1. Volunteering in StepEurope: When did you start volunteering in StepEurope? What has your volunteering looked like? What tasks and roles have you taken on?
2. Motivation to volunteer: What motivated you to start volunteering in StepEurope? What experiences in your background have influenced you in your motivation to volunteer for StepEurope? What was the best experience you have had in your volunteering?
3. Choose those statements that influence your motivation to volunteer the most. You can decide how many to choose:
  - I can belong to a group of like-minded people.
  - I can meet new people.
  - I can expand my international networks. (Finnish)
  - I can integrate into Finnish society. (Immigrant background)
  - I can learn new skills.
  - I can practice speaking English.
  - I can develop my cv.
  - I can choose when and how often I participate.
  - I can choose how I participate.
  - I can realise my own ideas.
  - I can contribute to important issues.
  - I can create activities for others.
  - I can give back to the community.

For each statement chosen: Tell me why you chose this statement. How has this been possible for you in your volunteering in StepEurope?

4. Barriers to volunteering: What do you think prevents young adults from volunteering in StepEurope? What could prevent you from volunteering?

5. StepEurope's role in motivating volunteers: What does StepEurope do to motivate volunteers? What could they develop to recruit more volunteers? What could StepEurope develop that would motivate you even more to volunteer? What role would you like to play in it?



an interviewee's choice of statements relating to her motivation to volunteer

### Appendix 3. Workshop outline

- Explaining the goal and outline of the workshops (5 min)
- Energizer: pillow race (10 min)
- Individual writing: foot (background: skills), hand (networks), heart (wishes) (15 min)
- Dividing in groups of 3-4 and finding a place to sit (5 min)
- Working in small groups:
  - Each group member presents their skills, networks and wishes (15 min)
  - Developing an idea for an activity or project based on the skills, networks and wishes of the group members. Writing down or drawing the idea on an A1 flipchart paper. The paper includes answers to: What? Why? For whom? When/how often? Where? Who will do/partners? -
- Sharing new ideas in the big group and comments (30 min)
- Creating a collage of the feet, hands and hearts (10 min)



a collage of skills, networks and wishes