



Skills acquired through
Volunteering in Sport

LEARNING RESOURCES

/// PILLAR 1: VOLUNTEER STRATEGY AND PLANNING

SUB-PILLAR 1.1 Assessing your volunteer needs - Workforce analysis and skills gaps



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/// Sub-Pillar 1.1

Assessing your volunteer needs – Workforce analysis and skills gaps

a/ DESCRIPTION

Volunteers are vital to the success of many sports organisations, but how often do we take the time to map the size and nature of the volunteer workforce required for a successful operation?

Even if you know what roles in your organisation need to be done by volunteers, have you mapped the required skills and knowledge in each position? This section features analysis tools and helpful content that will help you gain a stronger appreciation for your ideal volunteer workforce, including the skills gaps you may need to fill with new or upskilled volunteers.

b/ KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS – DID YOU KNOW THAT:

Sport volunteering is vital for the sport sector. Our desk research shows that 12 million EU citizens volunteer in sport every year, contributing over 97 million hours per month.

From the Global Survey of sport organisations we can see that:

- ② 92.2% of survey respondents said that sport organisations simply could not provide the services they do without volunteers,
- ② All seven key roles in sport organisations were filled either exclusively by volunteers or by a majority of volunteers.

Sport, at every level, must acknowledge the importance of volunteers, and every sport organisation should have a strategy for making best use of volunteers to improve its activities and reward their efforts.



>> CONTENT AREA 1: WORKFORCE ANALYSIS – MAPPING YOUR VOLUNTEERING NEEDS

There are two phases to the process of assessing your volunteering needs. This is one of the most fundamental tasks of ensuring your organisation has an appropriate team in place to enable you carry out your existing commitments as well as to enable you expand on the services you offer to your members and local community. The first phase – captured in this content area – is to analyse the current and potential workforce for your sport organisation. It might seem unusual, especially in a smaller organisation, to think of a group of volunteers as a ‘workforce’. This is useful, though, when considering the bundle of skills, knowledge and attributes required to successfully carry out your work.

So, for starters... how much do you know about your existing volunteer base? In Pillar 4 of this Toolkit you will find guidance on conducting skills audits with individual volunteers. Whilst this is aimed at supporting the process of helping them to develop, it can also be used to gain an appreciation of the skills you already have within your sport organisation. This can lead to pleasant surprises and potentially enable you to enhance and expand the activities your organisation undertakes. For the purposes of this exercise, understanding the range of skills, knowledge and attributes already present in your sport organisation is critical in working out where the gaps are.

Before we get ahead of ourselves, let’s consider the basics of identifying your ‘ideal’ workforce. In order to achieve this you will need a very clear idea of the objectives of your sport organisation, which may be articulated in the form of an organisational strategy. This will enable you to identify, in a broad sense, the roles and responsibilities that someone will need to carry out in order to put your strategy into action.

Note that there are other types of workforce analysis, including ones that are focused at the level of entire industries, but what we are interested in here is the needs of your organisation.

Here is a summary of the process you will need to go through in the first phase:

🕒 **Define objectives:**

Clearly outline the objectives and goals of the workforce analysis. Determine what specific insights you want to gain from the analysis. In this case the main priority will be on identifying skills needs.

② **Note down all roles and responsibilities:**

Working with relevant colleagues from within your sport organisation, make a master list or 'map' of all the tasks that need to be formed, from operational to managerial, in order to achieve successful operation of your sport organisation. Make sure that this information is organised into suitable categories, such as groups of tasks or the seven categories of volunteer work used throughout the V4V project (we'll remind you of these in the next content area).

② **Engage stakeholders:**

Involve key stakeholders such as volunteers, staff, board members and participants. Seek their input on workforce challenges and opportunities, as they often possess valuable insights and unique perspectives.

② **Promote diversity and inclusion:**

Evaluate the organisation's diversity levels and strive to create a more inclusive environment. One of the benefits of undertaking this type of analysis is to consider whether there is scope to diversify your workforce. This can lead to wider benefits, such as the sense of a more welcoming environment for people currently underrepresented in your sport organisation's participant base.

② **Monitor and review:**

Continuously monitor the workforce's performance, changes, and effectiveness of implemented strategies. This type of exercise needs to be conducted on a regular basis – if your workforce needs change this may generate new skills gaps.

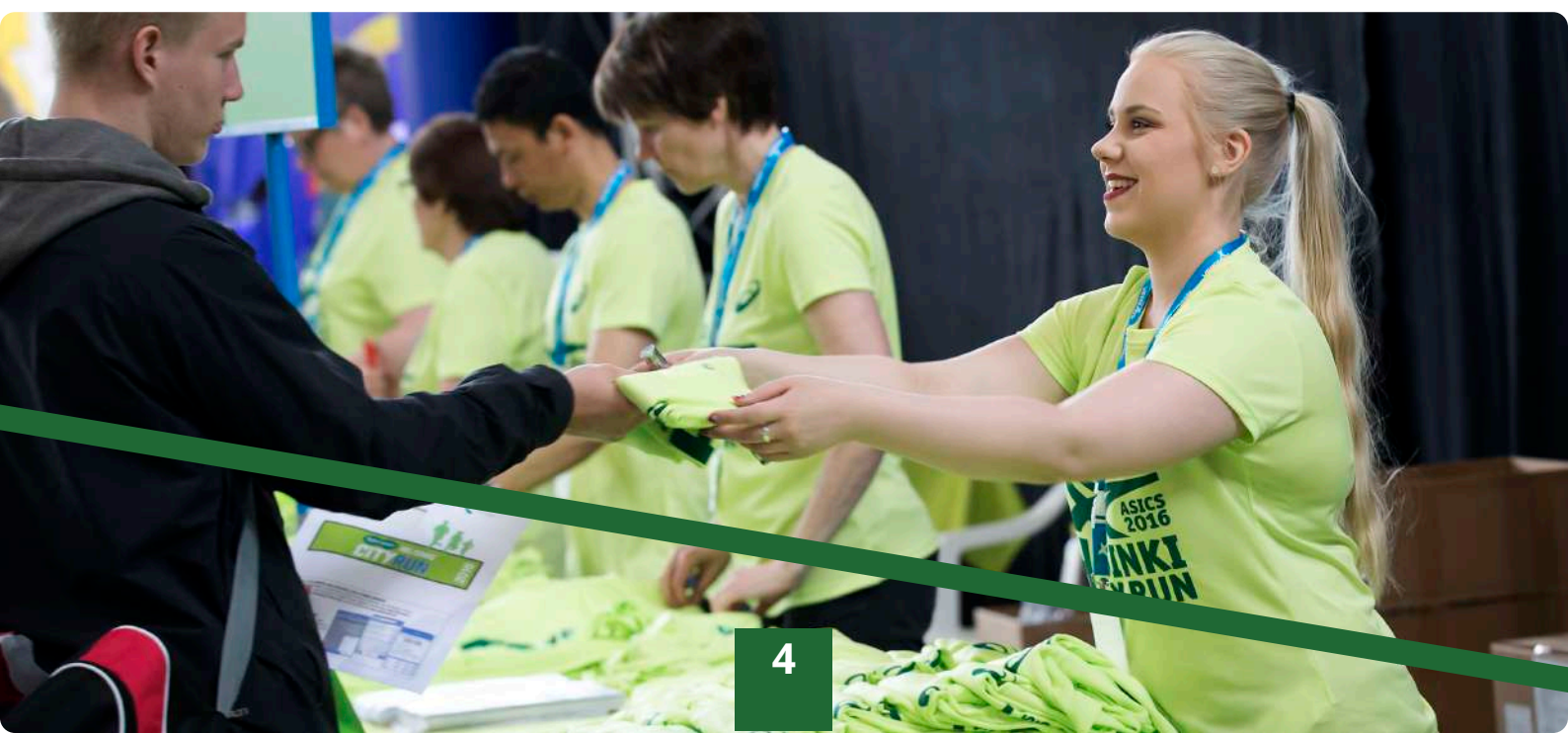
② **Communicate findings:**

Share the results of the analysis with relevant stakeholders. Transparency and open communication will help build support for the proposed action plan and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

② **Integrate workforce analysis with strategic planning:**

As mentioned above, integrate the findings of the workforce analysis into the organisation's broader strategic planning process. Ensure that human resource considerations align with the organisation's overall mission and vision.

The organisational skills needs 'map' that you create via this process will therefore serve as a vital resource for future development. In the next section we will look at how to use the information you have generated in order to identify skills gaps.



>> CONTENT AREA 2: WORKFORCE ANALYSIS – IDENTIFYING SKILLS GAPS IN YOUR ORGANISATION

If you have followed the process in the first content area of this sub-pillar, you will have a reasonably comprehensive picture of the skills needs of your volunteer workforce. Next, it is important to compare this against the actual skills, knowledge and attributes currently available in your sport organisation. Prepare for surprises as volunteers reveal hidden talents you were unaware of! Being able to identify skills shortages in your sport organisation will allow you to plan for the development of existing volunteers as well as the recruitment of new ones. *(These areas of work are covered in detail in Pillars 2 and 4 respectively)*

In the workforce mapping exercise outlined in the previous content area you will have created a structure by which to organise the information. Perhaps you used the seven V4V categories:

- Board or committee member/ governance
- Administration/ management
- Coaching/ training/ instructing/ leading activities
- Officiating (e.g. referee, umpire, judge)
- Organising or helping to run sport events
- Maintaining sport equipment and/ or sport facilities
- Supporting day to day sport organisation activities (e.g. bar, merchandising, transport)

Each of these could then be broken down into relevant skill areas appropriate the nature of your sport organisation. The V4V sport volunteer interviewees highlighted the key skills and attributes volunteers felt they brought to their roles, including technical skills appropriate to the role, communication, organisation, planning, social skills, cheerfulness, conscientiousness, courage and enthusiasm. These could be used as prompts for your own skills gap analysis.

Here are the key stages to undergo:

① **Collect relevant data:**

Gather data on the current workforce, including demographic information, skills, qualifications, roles, and performance. To ensure comprehensive data collection, use a consistent approach, perhaps by drawing up a standardised skills survey that all volunteers are asked to complete. This can be followed up with conversations for further clarification and depth. Your own observations as an experienced member of the volunteer workforce can also be valuable.

② **Analyse current workforce:**

Evaluate the data collected to identify patterns, trends, and areas for improvement. Look for skill shortages, diversity imbalances, volunteer turnover rates, and areas where volunteers might be underutilised. Remember in particular the points about diversity made in the above content area.

③ **Assess future needs:**

Consider your organisation's strategic plans and future projects to determine the workforce requirements. Anticipate potential changes in roles, skills, and capacity that may be needed to meet future goals. You could, if time and resources permit, analyse the current and future skills situations separately to allow for immediate action and forward planning.

④ **Identify skill gaps:**

Compare the existing skills and competencies of the workforce against the skills required for future needs. Identify areas where additional training, recruitment or skill development is necessary.

🕒 **Create an action plan:**

Develop a detailed action plan based on the findings of the workforce analysis and the identification of skills gaps. Prioritise objectives, allocate resources, and set measurable goals to track progress effectively.

Conducting a skills gap analysis in your sport organisation might not seem like the most obvious task when there are so many other things to do, but as we have shown it can make a fantastic contribution to optimal performance, diversification and securing a successful future!





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VOLUNTEER

V4V PARTNERSHIP:



Coordinator



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