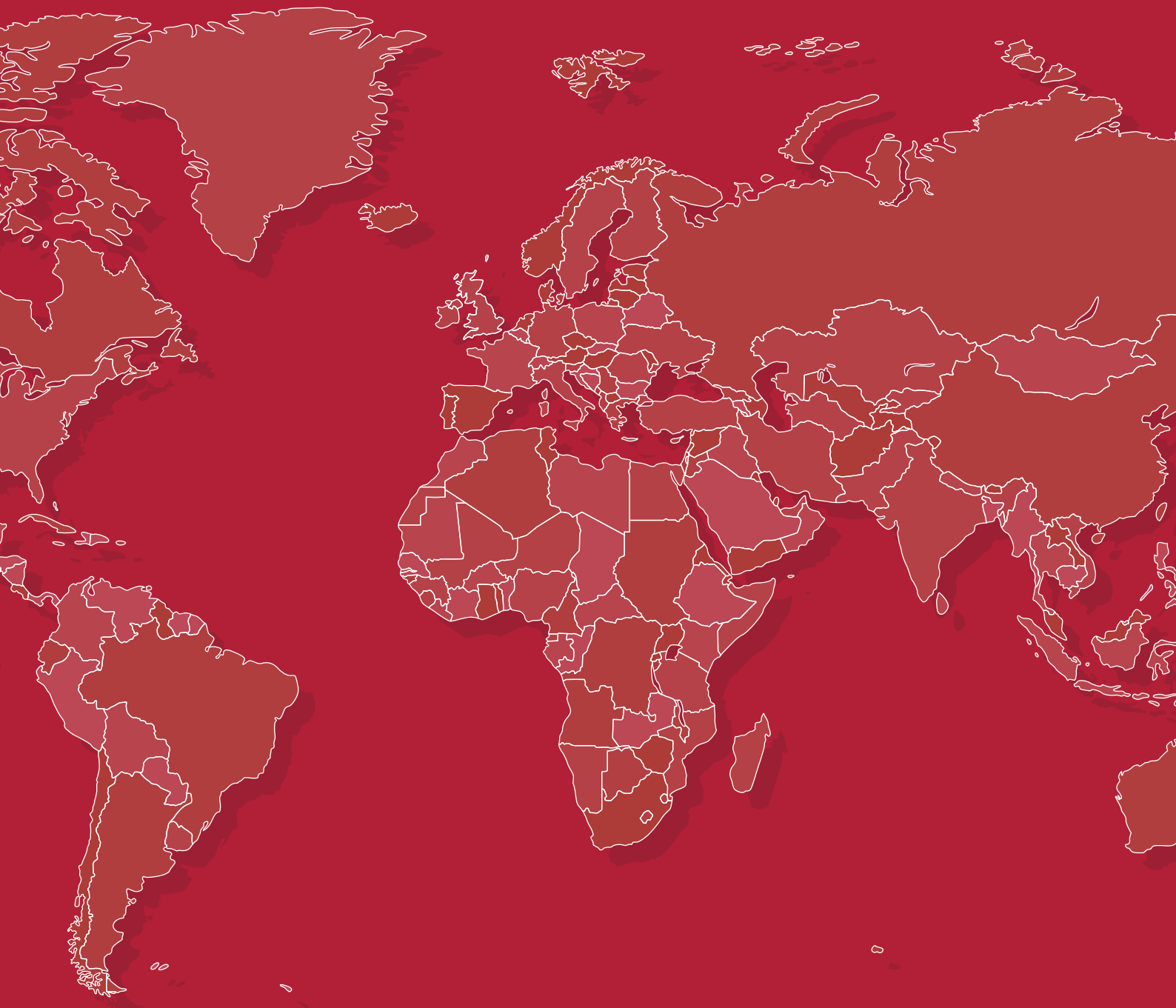


COMHLÁMH'S SURVEY ON INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING FROM IRELAND 2013



Honorary Patron, Mary Robinson.

This report was prepared with research undertaken by Siobán O'Brien Green, Research and Policy Officer, Comhlámh in 2014.

© **Comhlámh 2014**

Extracts from this publication may be reproduced for non-commercial purposes without permission, provided full acknowledgment is given to Comhlámh.



www.comhlamh.org

www.volunteeringoptions.org

Email info@comhlamh.org

Phone 01 478 3490



Irish Aid

An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

This report has been researched and written by Comhlámh, with funding from Irish Aid. The views expressed herein are those of Comhlámh and can in no way be taken to reflect the official option of Irish Aid. By virtue of preparing this report or otherwise in connection with this research, Comhlámh will not assume any responsibility or have any liability to any third parties.



Comhlámh is a signatory to the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages
www.dochas.ie

Please send your feedback on our adherence to the Code to info@comhlamh.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	4
About Comhlámh	4
List of Figures and Graphs	5
Glossary and Acronyms	6
Foreword by Minister Séan Sherlock T.D.	7
Executive Summary	8
1 Background to the Research	13
2 Methodology and Sample for the 2013 Survey	15
3 About Volunteer Sending Agencies in Ireland	20
4 Profile of Overseas Volunteers	30
5 Issues Affecting Overseas Volunteering	42
6 Concluding Remarks and Opportunities for Future Research	44
Bibliography and References	47
Appendices	48

Acknowledgements

Very sincere appreciation and thanks goes to the many Volunteer Sending Agencies who took part in the survey and provided the information, data and insights that allowed this report to be produced.

Comhlámh wishes to thank the members of the Comhlámh Research & Policy Expert Advisory Group:

Eilish Dillon,
PG/MA Co-ordinator, Kimmage Development Studies Centre.

Dervla King,
Programme Manager, Comhlámh.

Mags Liddy,
Project Coordinator, Ubuntu Network Department of Education and Professional Studies, University of Limerick.

Anne Matthews,
Senior Lecturer, School of Nursing and Human Sciences, Dublin City University.

James O'Brien,
Research and Advocacy Specialist, VSO Ireland.

Helene Perold,
Helene Perold & Associates, South Africa.

Additional thanks to Dr Sharon Prado, Director of Strategic Academic Initiatives, University College Dublin, Dr Pat McCloughan, PMCA Economic Consulting and the Comhlámh Staff. Finally we are very grateful to Carole Green, Helen Bartlett, Carlos Panero, Ben Green and Kevin Bohan who gave valuable advice and feedback on initial draft versions of the questionnaire.

About Comhlámh

Established in 1975, Comhlámh is a dynamic, independent membership organisation working together with development workers, volunteers and activists. Comhlámh is committed to advocating for a just and equitable world, setting standards and promoting good practice. Through awareness raising, research, education and training we empower individuals to take effective action to address global inequality. As the Irish Association of Development Workers and Volunteers we protect the interests of people working in development and for human rights. Our work is informed by their experiences.

Comhlámh promotes responsible, responsive volunteering for global development. We monitor and support the implementation of the Comhlámh Code of Good Practice (CoGP) among Irish volunteer sending agencies (VSAs). In addition, we provide comprehensive information, training and supports to volunteers and development workers before their overseas placements and when they return home.

LIST OF FIGURES AND GRAPHS

Table 3.1	Year Organisation was Founded	20
Table 3.2	Type of Organisation	21
Graph 3.1	Types of Volunteer Placement Offered by VSAs	21
Graph 3.2	Types of Volunteering Programmes Offered by VSAs	22
Graph 3.3	Number of Paid Staff in VSA	23
Graph 3.4	Funding Sources of VSAs	23
Table 3.3	Number of Applicants to VSAs, Number of Volunteers Wanted by VSAs and Number of Volunteers in 2013	24
Graph 3.5	Signatories to Comhlámh's Code of good Practice	25
Graph 3.6	Most Frequent Countries VSAs sent Volunteers to in 2013	26
Graph 3.7	Numbers of VSAs Sending Volunteers to Irish Aid Key Partner Countries	26
Graph 3.8	Changes in Interest in Overseas Volunteering	27
Graph 3.9	Fee or Contribution Requirement from Volunteers	28
Table 4.1	Number of Volunteers in 2013	31
Graph 4.1	Percentage Distribution of Volunteers by Age Category	31
Graph 4.2	Number of Volunteers by Age Category	32
Figure 4.1	Map of Nationalities of Volunteers in 2013	32
Graph 4.3	Number of Volunteers by Nationality	33
Graph 4.4	Percentage Distribution of Volunteers by Nationality	33
Table 4.2	Duration of Volunteering Placement	34
Graph 4.5	Percentage Distribution of Volunteers by Duration of Placement	34
Graph 4.6	Average Hours per Week Spent on Voluntary Activities per Volunteer Percentage Distribution	35
Graph 4.7	Activities Volunteers Participated in During their Placement	36
Graph 4.8	Status of Volunteers at Departure	37
Graph 4.9	Percentage Distribution of Volunteers by Status at Departure	38
Graph 4.10	Prior Experience of International Volunteering	38
Graph 4.11	Prior Experience of Domestic Volunteering	39
Graph 4.12	Number of Volunteers by Level of Educational Attainment	39

GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

Corporate Volunteering	Engaging for-profit sector employees in volunteering for a non-profit organisation or charitable cause. Many companies are committing their human and financial resources to local initiatives as they are increasingly aware of the benefits of engaging in corporate social responsibility activities.
DAC List	DAC is the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The DAC List shows the countries and territories eligible to receive official development assistance (ODA).
Diaspora Volunteering	Engaging immigrants or individuals who have a familial tie or heritage in another country in a volunteering programme to their country (or region) of origin. Engaging volunteers from diaspora communities enables a VSA to draw on the individual's specific skills, knowledge, and interests of that country whilst making financial and professional contributions to their communities 'back home'. This may include drawing on their own contacts and developing programmes ideas.
Dóchas	The Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations.
Host Communities	These are the local people international volunteers and staff work and live with while undertaking their overseas placements. They may include local residents and beneficiaries of the volunteer project.
Host Organisations	The organisations, community groups, partners or formal bodies in the destination country that receive volunteers and staff. Host organisations often provide direction and support to the volunteer on the activities in which they are engaged.
Host Projects	These are the organisations or community groups in the destination country that receive volunteers.
Online Volunteering	Volunteering where an online system or network (accessed through a computer, a mobile device, etc.) plays a primary role in the volunteer undertaking or delivering tasks. It may also be referred to as virtual volunteering.
Reciprocal Volunteering	This form of volunteering allows volunteers from the Global South to volunteer in the Global North and vice versa.
Recipient Countries	These are the countries that host international volunteers.
South to South Volunteering	This model provides volunteering opportunities for people in the Global South to volunteer in other countries in the Global South. This approach recognises that skills are not only located in the North and that volunteers from developing countries have valid knowledge to share and contributions to make.
Volunteer	One who freely renders a service or takes part in an enterprise. International volunteering in development includes both long-term and short-term placements which can be organised by both governmental and non-governmental agencies.
Volunteer Sending Agency/Agencies	These are agencies that arrange international volunteer placements mostly in developing countries. The agencies may be not-for-profit or for profit.
CoGP	Comhlámh's Code of Good Practice for Volunteer Sending Agencies
CRO	Companies Registration Office
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
DSAI	Development Studies Association, Ireland
GDP	Gross domestic product
IFGH	Irish Forum for Global Health
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
VSA	Volunteer Sending Agency
VSAs	Volunteer Sending Agencies

Please note that the terms defined in the Glossary are the working definitions used by Comhlámh and may relate specifically to the Irish context for overseas volunteering. The terms overseas and international volunteering are used interchangeably in this report.

FOREWORD

BY MINISTER SÉAN SHERLOCK T.D.

I would like to welcome this important research undertaken by Comhlámh, with support from Irish Aid, the Government's overseas aid programme.



Last year, the Government launched the Irish Aid Volunteering Initiative, which recognises the huge contribution Irish volunteers have long made, and will continue to make, to the achievement of sustainable development globally. The specific aims of the Volunteering Initiative are to strengthen support for volunteering at each stage of the volunteering process – from the information stage to the volunteer's return, including modernising support for volunteering, encouraging innovation and increasing interest in overseas volunteering. The collation of this research represents one important component of that initiative.

This year's survey indicates that there continues to be a strong interest in overseas volunteering from Ireland. Other noteworthy trends include the increase in first time volunteers and the growth in online and Diaspora volunteering programmes. Last year, volunteers from Ireland worked in 47 countries and contributed their skills and experience in a wide variety of sectors, including teaching and education, youth development, community development and healthcare.

Irish Aid strives to make a difference to the lives of people in some of the world's poorest communities. I believe that everyone in our society should have an opportunity to deepen their knowledge of development issues and to understand the important role that they can play in helping to combat the causes of global poverty and hunger. International volunteering is one such way that people can get involved and make a difference.

I would like to congratulate all involved in compiling this research. Information of the kind represented in this analysis is critically important in charting how best we can continue to support what has been a long and valued tradition of volunteering from Ireland.

Seán Sherlock

Seán Sherlock T.D.,

Minister for Development, Trade Promotion, and North South Co-operation

Executive Summary

The findings of this report are based on data emerging from an online survey issued to volunteer sending agencies (VSAs) based in Ireland during March and April 2014. This report follows the previous survey of volunteer sending agencies in Ireland commissioned by Comhlámh in 2012, *New Evidence on Overseas Volunteering from Ireland and its Socio-Economic Impact in Ireland*. Collating and analysing yearly survey data to report an accurate picture of the state of VSAs in Ireland and international volunteering is a crucial part of monitoring trends in order that Comhlámh, and other interested parties and funders, can respond in a timely way to developments within and affecting the sector. It is hoped that by Comhlámh conducting this research on an annual basis VSAs will be encouraged to collect, collate and store the type of quantitative data required to fully engage with and complete the survey. This should lead over time to enhanced and comprehensive statistics from the overseas volunteering sector in Ireland and will allow longitudinal data comparison and trends in volunteering to be captured, analysed and reported by Comhlámh. It will also support the Irish Aid Volunteering Initiative aims and roll out. Additionally the 2012 report concluded by recommending that Comhlámh conduct quantitative research on an annual basis with VSAs capturing data relating to both volunteers and VSAs: this report responds to that recommendation.

Methodology

The data collected through the online survey relates to volunteering and activities of VSAs during the calendar year 2013. The added focus of the 2013 survey was to enhance the questionnaire dissemination, boost survey responses and reduce the number of questions skipped by respondents. This is with the overall aim of mainstreaming the Comhlámh survey so that VSAs anticipate it on an annual basis and that response rates and VSA participation will hopefully increase year on year. Forty nine VSAs completed the survey and the actual sample size of VSAs confirmed eligible to participate in the study that definitively meet the inclusion criteria for the 2013 survey was 63 VSAs, which implies a survey response rate of 78%. More information and details of the research methodology are outlined in section two of the report.

About Volunteer Sending Agencies

Section three of the report analyses data relating to the structures of VSAs, the types of volunteering programmes offered, the countries which volunteers went to and the demand for international volunteering placements in 2013. From the survey responses it can be ascertained that:

- The majority of the VSAs that participated in the survey have been founded since 2000 and despite the economic crisis seven new VSAs have opened since 2010. This indicates a desire and demand for overseas volunteering opportunities in Ireland. Although the number of VSAs that have ceased operations or have put their volunteering programmes on hold for capacity or resource reasons cannot be ascertained from the survey data, internal Comhlámh data suggests that a number of VSAs stopped sending volunteers in 2013 and at least four VSAs ceased operations.

- The vast majority of VSAs are not-for-profit organisations, almost 92% of VSAs surveyed categorised themselves as such.
- The types of volunteering placements offered by VSAs include individual and group placements with the majority of VSAs, 40%, offering both.
- Youth volunteering emerged as by far the most frequently offered type of volunteering programme in the survey with over 80% of VSAs offering youth volunteering in their programmes. Other forms such as corporate, diaspora and online modalities of volunteering are also offered, although by smaller numbers of VSAs. However, there appears to be growth in the numbers of VSAs offering corporate and diaspora volunteering programmes when the survey results for 2012 and 2013 are compared. Diaspora and online volunteering programmes were offered by 13% and 11% of VSAs respectively.
- The majority of VSAs have between one and nine staff members (combining both full-time and part-time staff). However, over 25% of the VSAs surveyed have no staff and as a result are volunteer led and run. This is a significant proportion of VSAs and demonstrates the commitment of volunteers to supporting VSAs within Ireland as well as overseas.
- VSAs rely on a variety of funding sources, the most important of which are donations from the public, fundraising events and volunteer contributions or placement fees signifying financial support from the Irish public for the work of VSAs.
- A total of 3,950 applications for volunteer placements were received in 2013 by the 47 VSAs who answered this question. This exceeded the number of volunteers that VSAs wanted to recruit in 2013 which was 2,270. This indicates a substantial interest in and demand for international volunteering placements in 2013 in Ireland.
- The majority of VSAs, 77%, completing the survey were signatories to the Comhlámh Code of Good Practice implying a high level of commitment within the sector to working to ensure responsible and responsive volunteering.
- Volunteers from Ireland worked in 47 countries in 2013 and all Irish Aid Key Partner countries: Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam and Zambia, received volunteers from Ireland in 2013.
- Most VSAs, 43%, reported no change in interest in volunteering between 2012 and 2013. Reasons given for the reported decline in interest in volunteering from VSAs related to the cost of volunteering and the impact of the recession in Ireland. Reasons given for the reported increase in interest in volunteering were targeted marketing by the VSA and a resultant increase in awareness of the VSA and its volunteer programmes.
- The majority of VSAs surveyed, 73%, have a fee, minimum contribution or fundraising requirement for their volunteers. This amount varies widely between VSAs often depending on the location and duration of the volunteering placement.

In conclusion, there is considerable activity amongst VSAs in Ireland, with many new VSAs opening in the past few years demonstrating interest in, and demand for, international volunteering. Most of the VSAs who answered the survey are signatories to the Comhlámh Code of Good Practice which indicates a willingness to commit to, and measure, good practice in overseas volunteering. Youth volunteering is the most frequently offered form of volunteering programme emerging from the data: additionally, a growth in corporate volunteering and diaspora volunteering programmes was noted when comparing the 2012 and 2013 survey data. VSAs have a range of funding sources, the most important of which are donations from the public, fundraising events and volunteer placement fees with 73% of VSAs having a fee or minimum contribution. Volunteers from Ireland travelled to many countries for their volunteer placements; the majority of them were on the continent of Africa. The number of applicants to VSAs for volunteer placements exceeded the number of volunteers desired by VSAs in 2013 showing a strong interest in international volunteering opportunities.

Profile of International Volunteers in 2013

Section four of this report examines the demographic profile of volunteers and the nature and length of their volunteering activities whilst overseas. From the survey data it can be ascertained that:

- Thirty eight VSAs sent 1,728 male and female volunteers overseas from Ireland in 2013 a slight decrease in the figure emerging from the 2012 data which was 2,120 volunteers. Of the 1,728 volunteers in 2013 66% were female and 34% were male. However, these figures need to be treated with some degree of caution as only 38 VSAs answered this question. The difference between the number of men and women volunteering requires further analysis and longitudinal research to fully understand this finding and to examine if it will be a continuing trend in future surveys.
- The majority of volunteers from Ireland in 2013 (46%) were aged between 18 and 25 years. The second largest cohort of volunteers by age breakdown comprised of those aged between 26 and 30 years at 15%. The survey results demonstrate that the vast majority, 71%, of international volunteers in 2013 were aged less than 30 years. There are much smaller cohorts of volunteers aged over 66 (less than 2%).
- Most volunteers in 2013 were Irish (almost 90%) with smaller amounts from the UK, Europe and other countries.
- The majority of volunteers, 77%, were on placements for four weeks or less. This demonstrates both supply and demand for short-term overseas volunteering placements in 2013 which is similar to the data emerging in the 2012 survey.
- VSAs estimated that over 51% of their volunteers worked between 30 and 39 hours per week while 22% worked between 40 and 49 hours per week during their volunteer placements.
- Volunteers in 2013 were most active during their placements in the areas of: teaching/training; children/youth development; capacity building; medicine and healthcare and community development.
- Students were the largest cohort of volunteers (54%) categorised by their status, with employed people forming the second largest cohort (33%).
- The proportion of volunteers with prior experience of overseas volunteering was 43%, and those volunteering for the first time in 2013 were 57% of the cohort. This indicates an increase in new and first time volunteers in 2013. Just over 75% of volunteers had prior experience of volunteering domestically.
- The majority of volunteers (38%) had attained either lower post-primary education or equivalent (e.g. Irish Junior Certificate), with 29% having a bachelor's degree or the equivalent (honours or non-honours level) level of education. However, many VSAs do not collect this information so this particular survey result must be interpreted with caution.

To summarise, international volunteers travelling from Ireland in 2013 were primarily women, aged 30 or younger, Irish nationals, students and going on placements of four weeks or less. The concentration of young volunteers and short-term volunteering placements suggests limited opportunities for skills transfer between volunteers and host communities and raises broader questions about the role of international volunteer placements in achieving long-term development goals within such short time periods. It does indicate the importance of comprehensive pre-departure training for volunteers in order for them to rapidly acclimatise and commence their placement immediately upon arrival. It also indicates the critical importance of post-placement return opportunities and supports to allow volunteers to continue to engage with development issues and the VSA they went on placement with. The high number of volunteers active in the areas of teaching, children and youth development, special needs advocacy and support, indicates an onus on the sending VSAs to ensure that child protection procedures, policies and training are in place for volunteers, host communities and VSA staff.

This is also relevant to overseas volunteers who are aged less than 18 years. It should be noted that in the 2013 survey section “Profile of your overseas volunteers” the response rates were somewhat lower than other sections. This implies that in some cases definitive findings are not possible with the incomplete data available. Many of the VSAs also stated that they don’t collect the data required to answer certain questions which leads to some limitations in relation to the analysis.

Barriers to International Volunteering

Section five of this report focuses on any perceived issues, identified by the VSAs, which may affect overseas volunteering and volunteer recruitment. The research findings indicate that despite interest in and demand for international volunteering placements there are barriers and challenges emerging for both the volunteer and the VSA. The most significant barrier noted is the financial cost of volunteering, with time off work or being away from the labour market and job opportunities also noted as problematic. Resolving these two issues will be crucial for VSAs in order to attract potential new volunteers and to retain previous volunteers for future overseas placements.

Concluding Remarks

Conducting this research with VSAs for two years running has enabled Comhlámh to collate key data relating to the international volunteering sector in Ireland and to identify a number of emerging trends. The survey has been updated and revised to take into account the recommendations identified in the 2012 report, as well as feedback from key stakeholders and VSAs themselves. This has enabled a focus on the profile of both the VSAs and the volunteers they are recruiting in Ireland.

Amongst the key trends emerging when the data is compared between the two years is the continued vibrancy of the sector, as evidenced by the number of VSAs that are operating from Ireland and the large volume of applications for overseas placements that they received. Strong ongoing support from the public for international volunteering is also apparent, manifesting itself financially through donations and fundraising events, as well as by the fact that just over 25% of VSAs are operated on a voluntary basis. This is particularly notable at a time when overall support for charities is decreasing and their role is coming under increasing scrutiny from members of the public. The findings demonstrate that the overall number of VSAs has remained high in recent years, despite the challenging external environment.

In terms of types of placements, the most common volunteering opportunities being offered by VSAs in 2013 were youth placements, which was also one of the main types offered in 2012. This suggests an ongoing interest in volunteering that is continuing to renew itself on an annual basis. Data comparisons between 2012 and 2013 indicate that the number of VSAs offering corporate/private sector and diaspora volunteering opportunities is increasing, while online volunteering is a small but growing part of overall placements. The main activities that formed the focus of volunteer placements in 2012 and 2013 were children/youth development, capacity building, community development, and building and construction. In 2013, other most frequent volunteer activities were teaching/training; medicine/healthcare; and disability/special needs. This marked a change from the prevalence of agriculture/food security and business, finance and enterprise that were common in 2012. The shifting emphasis of activities may be taken to indicate programmes that are responsive to the needs of host communities; it may also reflect changes in the composition of VSAs during the year, and the availability or lack of availability of volunteers with particular skills and qualifications.

Comparisons between the data for both years indicate a number of changes in the profile of those volunteering from Ireland. The number of female volunteers increased from 50% to 66% between the two years, while the number of volunteers with Irish nationality grew from 85% in 2012 to 90% in 2013. There was a drop in the number of those with prior experience of overseas volunteering, from 52% in 2012 to 43% in 2013, suggesting an increase in new and first time volunteers and supporting the idea that volunteering is continuing to be of interest to a wide group of people.

Perhaps the most significant finding in terms of demographics is that the number of volunteers aged 30 and under continues to grow, from 50% in 2012 to 71% in 2013. The biggest single group within this were volunteers aged between 18 and 25 years (46% of the total). In 2013, the largest cohort by employment status was comprised of students (54%), followed by employed people (34%): again, this is a significant change from 2012, when the figures were 40% and 44% respectively. Additionally, the proportion of volunteers undertaking short-term placements of four weeks or less increased year on year, from 70% in 2012 to 77% in 2013.

Taken together, these findings give rise to a number of questions about the nature and role of overseas volunteering from Ireland. Recent research (for example Allum 2012, UNV 2011) has suggested a surge in shorter-term international youth volunteering, which raises questions about the resultant shift from longer-term placements with an emphasis on professional skills and experience. Large scale, state-sponsored youth volunteering initiatives have in recent years been introduced in countries including Germany (weltwärts), Norway (FK Norway) and the UK (International Citizen Service). These frequently have a stated focus on global learning and on the contribution that volunteers make to raising awareness of development issues on their return home. The issue of supply-side demand for these placements has been raised in a number of evaluations, while their longer term impact on host communities and contribution to mainstream development outcomes is still being evaluated in many cases.

A large majority of survey respondents stated that their organisation is a signatory to Comhlámh's CoGP, which outlines a number of principles guiding all aspects of a volunteer placement and emphasising the need for equal partnership between the sending agency, the host community and the individual volunteer. The CoGP is revised every two years, in consultation with signatories, and the findings from the research indicate that particular consideration needs to be given in future revisions to ensuring that the principles are cognisant of the shift towards shorter term youth volunteering. One recommendation from Comhlámh's research on the role of returned volunteers as development education multipliers (2013) was that further efforts need to be made to integrate development education into the CoGP: doing so in consultation with VSAs and returned volunteers would help to ensure that no matter what the length of time of a placement, the idea of ongoing engagement would be mainstreamed from the outset.

Additionally, the survey findings highlight the need to focus on the return stage of the volunteer cycle: previous research (such as Comhlámh 2013, Allum 2012, Tiessen 2012) indicates that this stage of the volunteer experience is often assigned insufficient resources and attention, despite the fact that returnees can be a significant resource for change making. Conditions identified that nurture and support ongoing engagement include recognition, access to support services, offering a range of options for involvement, providing a space to debate issues, and assistance with finding a suitable opportunity. The evolving nature of volunteering suggests that it is very important for Comhlámh to continue to work on these issues, whether directly with volunteers or in partnership with VSAs, including through the CoGP. Without a focus on engagement and action post-return, there is a danger that the huge potential for overseas placements to support global learning may not be maximised.

1. Background to the Research

Background

Collating and analysing the survey data to report an accurate picture of the state of VSAs in Ireland and international volunteering is a crucial part of monitoring emerging trends from VSAs in order that Comhlámh, and other interested parties and funders, can respond in a timely way to developments within the sector. This report follows on from the 2012 survey of volunteer sending agencies in Ireland prepared for Comhlámh by Dr Pat McCloughan. The report *New Evidence on Overseas Volunteering from Ireland and its Socio-Economic Impact in Ireland* (hereafter referred to as the 2012 report) captured information on international volunteering activity from Ireland, including demographic information on volunteers, and assessed the socio-economic impact of international volunteering for development from Ireland to overseas locations. This research provided important new data and analysis, as well as an estimation of the value to the Irish economy of international volunteering from Ireland.

The 2012 report was launched in August 2013, and received extensive media coverage, as well as interest from domestic and international Volunteer Sending Agencies (VSAs) and other development actors. Its success marked the beginning of systematic information gathering exercises by Comhlámh to improve understanding of the overseas volunteering sector. The data gathering exercise was repeated via an online survey in 2014, which the organisation plans to conduct on an annual basis with VSAs in order to collect comparable longitudinal data, develop a sound evidence base on VSAs and volunteers and capture trends in overseas volunteering from Ireland.

Overview of the 2013 Survey

While the 2012 report took an in-depth approach to the analysis of the socio-economic contribution of international volunteering to Ireland and also examined skill acquisition and enhancement occurring through volunteering, the 2013 survey took a slightly different focus. The in-depth analysis of gross domestic product (GDP) contribution and employment impact of VSAs were assessed and presented in the 2012 report; while this is valuable and important data, it is not likely to change substantially year on year and was therefore not included in the 2013 survey. Additionally the questions on skills acquired or enhanced by volunteers through volunteering were omitted from the 2013 survey, as there is an inherent bias in asking VSAs to comment without similar and comparable research with volunteers themselves. Comhlámh hopes to undertake research on this topic using qualitative methodologies with returned overseas volunteers in the near future. As a result of these changes an increased focus on discovering any barriers to overseas volunteering was selected as key part of the 2013 survey.

One of the objectives of repeating the research process was to begin to establish this survey as an annual piece of data collection that would also encourage VSAs, where possible, to collect and collate data internally and to participate in the Comhlámh survey. Comhlámh hopes that by establishing, undertaking and repeating this research annually, it will provide year on year comparable data that is timely, useful and robust for the Irish overseas volunteering sector. The data from annual surveys will assist in informing international volunteering practice in Ireland and will support Comhlámh's work with and for volunteers before, during and after their volunteering placements in addition to work with VSAs in relation to the CoGP.

Structure of the Report

The report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 outlines the research methodology, the sampling technique, how survey participant recruitment occurred and any potential limitations of the research and as a result the findings.
- Section 3 analyses data relating to the structures of VSAs, the types of volunteering programmes offered, the countries that volunteers went to and demand for international volunteering placements. It discusses the survey findings and makes comparisons with data from the 2012 survey where possible.
- Section 4 examines who volunteered overseas from Ireland in 2013 and their employment and educational status. It also examines the demographic profile of volunteers and the nature and length of their volunteering activities whilst overseas, comparing the findings with data from the 2012 survey where possible.
- Section 5 focuses on any perceived issues, as identified by the VSAs that may affect overseas volunteering and their volunteer recruitment. This section also analyses the comments from the survey respondents.
- Section 6 provides a conclusion to the report and describes areas and opportunities for future research.

Clarification Note

- Throughout the text of the report, the 2012 survey or report refers to the research which was commissioned in 2012 by Comhlámh, undertaken by Dr Pat McCloughan and published and launched in 2013. The data in the 2012 survey refers to volunteering activities and VSA figures for the calendar year of 2012.
- The 2013 survey refers to this research report. The data in the 2013 survey refers to volunteering activities and VSA figures for the calendar year of 2013.

2. Methodology and Sample for the 2013 Survey

Questionnaire Design

Work on repeating the Comhlámh VSA survey began in January 2014 with a detailed review of the 2012 questionnaire and the collated response data with a key focus on establishing: low response rate questions, clarifying question wording where necessary and determining possible questions to be included or omitted for the 2013 survey. As a result of this review a revised questionnaire was drafted, which attempted to ensure as much comparability as possible between the 2012 and 2013 surveys. Feedback was also sought from a market research expert and a non-profit consultant who greatly assisted with the review process: in response to their comments, the question sequence, wording and response options were changed slightly. Some of the questions were adapted to reflect the text and response information categories presented in the VSA Information section of the Comhlámh Code of Good Practice self-audit tool (see Appendix I for more information). The annual data collated for the Comhlámh Code of Good Practice (CoGP) self-audits is not published but it can be used for confidential and internal cross-referencing by Comhlámh staff in order to verify survey data, trends and reliability. Therefore it was important to have some level of comparison possible between the 2013 survey question text and the CoGP self-audit tool. Comments on the 2012 survey from respondents and from Comhlámh staff were also examined to improve the 2013 survey proposed questionnaire design.

Dr Pat McCloughan was contacted for his advice on the research process and survey design and his feedback resulted in a number of further revisions. The Central Statistics Office Databank and Dissemination Section were also contacted for input into the question examining the status of a volunteer at the time of their departure to volunteer (i.e. employed, student, retired, etc). The responses possible to the question were amended to correlate better with the Irish Census for potential future comparison and to capture the full range of volunteers' statuses. It is important to note that as a result of the changes made to 2013 survey questions on foot of the extensive consultations and review process detailed above, direct comparison for some question responses between the 2012 and 2013 surveys is not possible.

Efforts to increase individual question response rate and decrease the number of questions skipped by 2012 survey respondents were made by amending the question order, changing the question text for the purposes of clarity, adding a "Don't Know" or "Don't collect this information" category to some questions (where appropriate) and allowing respondents to add text and comments into "Other- please specify/describe" response categories to expand on or clarify their answers for suitable questions. Overall some questions were omitted and some were

added to the 2013 survey in order to gather slightly different information while still collating a year on year evidence base relating to overseas volunteering from Ireland. It is envisaged that each year the survey is conducted variations on question focus to probe for new relevant data can be added to ensure a robust picture of volunteering from Ireland is collated.

The 2012 survey used the online survey software tool Survey Monkey to disseminate the survey, collect and analyse the subsequent data. Whilst other online survey options were also considered Survey Monkey was again utilised for the 2013 survey process principally due to cost, ease of use and similarity for respondents with the interface of the previous 2012 survey. Survey Monkey Customer Support was contacted on numerous occasions by the researcher in relation to survey functionality, question design and user interaction with the online tool to ensure the best possible respondent interface.

Piloting the 2013 Survey

Similar to the 'road-test' process in 2012 the revised 2013 questionnaire was piloted to ensure it was clear to survey participants, free of errors and fully functional prior to dissemination. The draft survey was piloted internally with Comhlámh staff and externally with a market research expert and an experienced researcher in the non-profit sector. The first pilot phase feedback was collated and the research questionnaire amended with some changes to question wording, survey layout and response formats made. An external pilot phase then took place with two VSAs, and their comments and feedback were collated and incorporated as appropriate. A final pilot of the draft questionnaire took place with a business intelligence consultant familiar with large database construction, data capture and data mining to ensure the feasibility of the analytical functionality of the proposed survey. As a result of this final pilot phase a number of question response options were changed from text to numeric options in order to enable enhanced response analysis. Those VSAs who participated in the pilot survey were subsequently invited to complete the final version of the survey. The final full text of the 2013 survey questionnaire is in Appendix II of this report.

Building a Survey Sample

In parallel to the development and review of the survey questionnaire the process of establishing the universe of VSAs that would make up the sample began. The aim was to "cast the net as widely as possible" and to create a contact database of as many potential VSAs operating from Ireland as was considered feasible. The initial starting point of the sample creation was to gather contact details for the agencies that were sent the 2012 survey and the signatories to the Comhlámh CoGP. In the 2012 report the universe or total number of VSAs to which the survey was sent was determined at 78 VSAs. For the 2013 survey a more ambitious approach was taken to gather and document as many operating VSAs as possible based in Ireland, including Northern Ireland. A non-probability sample, which is a purposeful non-random sample of all VSAs operating from the island of Ireland, was determined to be the most inclusive approach to creating a sample to disseminate the 2013 survey to.

Efforts to Make the Survey Sample Up to Date, Complete and Inclusive

Efforts to ensure that the survey sample was as comprehensive and up to date as possible were made by the researcher. This involved collating the 2012 survey dissemination list with 2013 list of Comhlámh CoGP Signatories, taking contact details from the Comhlámh website directory of VSAs, and internal consultation with Comhlámh staff. The Irish Aid 2012 Annual Report funding recipient list was also assessed for additions to the survey sample as well as the current Dóchas

Members (as listed on the Dóchas website) and all Activelink website listings for organisations under the World Development heading. This exercise resulted in a database of 117 VSA contacts to whom the 2013 survey questionnaire was disseminated by email.

Sample Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Although the work to build a complete and larger survey sample for the 2013 research was successful in expanding the number of VSAs to contact and disseminate the survey to, a criteria for inclusion and exclusion for the non-probability sample needed to be defined to ensure that accurate confidence intervals and confidence levels could be calculated and the subsequent required survey response rate determined. The 2013 survey inclusion and exclusion criteria are as follows:

“Are legally registered as either a company (with the Companies Registration Office (CRO) in the Republic of Ireland or in Northern Ireland with HM Revenue and Customs) and/or registered as a charity (with the Charities Section, Revenue Commissioners or in Northern Ireland with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland)

and

have sent volunteers overseas from Ireland in 2013.”

This implies that in order to participate in the research and to complete the survey a VSA **must** meet the above criteria.

As a result of the collation exercise for the survey sample the list of 117 VSAs was verified with the “List of bodies who have been granted Charitable Tax Exemption @ 19th January 2014 under Section 207, Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997” from the Revenue Charities Office and the Companies Registration Office (CRO) company search function on the CRO website. This exercise excluded some of the 117 VSAs on the database as some may have sent volunteers from Ireland but may not be registered as companies or charities in Ireland or Northern Ireland. Follow up phone calls to VSAs on the database took place if there was any query on their compliance with the survey inclusion and exclusion criteria. The phone calls aimed to both determine; (1) if a VSA had sent volunteers from Ireland overseas in 2013, (if not they were removed from master list for the purposes of calculating survey sample size required to be statistically significant) and also; (2) to boost survey response rate for the 2013 survey by encouraging participation in the research. As a result of this exercise a final sample size of eligible VSAs was determined to be 63. However, a further 16 VSAs could not be contacted by phone or email (despite multiple attempts by the researcher and Comhlámh staff) to either confirm or refute sending volunteers overseas from Ireland in 2013. If these additional 16 VSAs are added to the confirmed survey sample the potential maximum survey sample size could be 79 VSAs. Due to the confidential and anonymous nature of the survey the list of VSAs who were sent the survey does not appear in the report.

The difference between the initial 117 VSAs whom the 2013 survey was disseminated to and the final figure of 63 VSAs who meet the survey inclusion criteria (or potentially up to 79) is because:

- Not all VSAs send volunteers overseas every year, some may send on a bi-annual basis and as a result be eligible to participate in the 2012 survey but not the 2013 survey;
- Some VSAs closed and ceased functioning during 2013 or early in 2014;
- Some VSAs had planned to send volunteers overseas in 2013 but due to security issues or natural disasters in intended host countries could not complete their volunteer programme, which may also impact on overall figures for volunteers in 2013 emerging in this report;

- Some VSAs have re-configured their operations to reduce the number of volunteers they send and instead focus on local volunteers or employees in host countries;
- Some potential VSAs or Irish development NGOs sent staff or interns from Ireland overseas, who as a result were not classified as volunteers;
- Some of the VSAs who were invited to participate in the 2013 survey did not meet the inclusion criteria in relation to CRO and CHY (or Northern Ireland equivalents) status.

It is important to note that the sample size for the 2012 survey was determined to be 78 VSAs: similar to the potential maximum of 79 VSAs in 2013 but higher than the verifiable sample of 63 that definitively meet the inclusion criteria for the 2013 survey.

Dissemination of the 2013 Survey: Process and Time Frame

The 2013 survey link was emailed to all 117 identified contacts on the 25 March 2014. The date was chosen based on feedback from the 2012 survey, which suggested survey dissemination later in the calendar year could lead to higher response rate. The initial survey completion time frame was just over three weeks, but this was extended to allow for as many VSAs as possible to participate in the survey. Any emails that “bounced back” or were declared undeliverable were analysed and where possible the survey invitation email was re-sent to a different email address. As the verification process for inclusion into the research sample continued during the research phase additional VSAs were added to the database and were invited to participate in the survey. Comhlámh contacts were identified who have reach into VSA networks and were sent the “Information on Invitation to participate in Comhlámh Research” by email and asked to circulate it to relevant colleagues and contacts (see Appendix III). Dóchas, the Development Studies Association, Ireland and the Irish Forum for Global Health all kindly assisted the research process by disseminating the survey information and link through their networks. Reminder emails were re-sent to VSAs and the survey time frame was extended (mainly due to the data collection deadline falling during the Easter holiday period) and finally closed on 9 May 2014. This allowed for a period of just over six weeks to participate in the research, slightly longer than the five weeks given for the 2012 data collection. During the research process VSAs were encouraged to contact the researcher with any queries, questions and concerns they might have.

Efforts to Boost 2013 Survey Response Rate

In advance of and during the 2013 survey dissemination and data collection phases the researcher highlighted and promoted the research and encouraged VSA participation through a variety of routes including presentations and e-newsletters. All Comhlámh staff were asked to disseminate and promote the survey with their contacts and individual staff members sent emails to VSAs they were working with highlighting the survey. Reminder emails encouraging participation in the research and communicating the extension of time to complete the survey were sent to VSAs on the database by the researcher in April.

Shortcomings, Limitations and Caveats

Despite contact with Survey Monkey Customer Support and suggestions from the piloting of the survey there were still some functionality limitations that remained undesirable in relation to response options and analysis. As noted, the question design, order and phrasing was changed in a number of cases which means that analysis of the data from the 2012 survey and the 2013 survey is not always fully comparable. Whilst the desire to gather more knowledge and ask more and varied questions every year through the survey process is understandable, most VSAs

work with few resources and may have limited staff time to devote to completing the survey. As a result the time to complete the survey and length of the survey are essential factors in encouraging VSAs to participate in the survey and to complete it. Excessive questions and longer time required to finish the survey could be seen as disincentives to participate in the survey.

Due to the confidential nature of the survey and how the data were collected it is not possible to state that the same VSAs participated in the 2013 survey as in the 2012 survey, and as a result although comparisons can be made with question responses from the two surveys we cannot be fully sure that we are comparing like with like. Therefore some caution needs to be applied when looking at trends emerging between the two surveys.

Concluding Remarks

The added focus of the 2013 survey was to enhance the questionnaire dissemination, boost survey responses and reduce the number of questions skipped by respondents, with the overall aim of mainstreaming the Comhlámh VSA survey so that VSAs anticipate it on an annual basis and that response rates and VSA participation will increase year on year. Results of efforts to boost survey response rates meant that when the survey closed in early May 2014 49 VSAs had taken part in the research, which demonstrates an overall slight increase of three VSAs on the 2012 survey. This would imply a survey response rate of 78%, which is higher than the 60% response rate in the 2012 Survey. When a sample size of 63 VSAs is used to calculate the total survey sample a confidence interval (or margin of error) of 6.5 and a confidence level of 95% can be assumed. With the potential larger sample size of 79 VSAs the confidence interval rises to 9, while the confidence level of 95% remains.

Individual question response rates in the 2013 survey were higher overall than the 2012 survey. This calculation is based on a sample size of 63 with 49 survey respondents and 25 questions (the 25 questions excludes the final question 26 which was compulsory to answer). A table showing the breakdown of individual question response rates is in Appendix IV.

It is hoped that by Comhlámh conducting this research on an annual basis VSAs will be encouraged to collect, collate and store the type of quantitative data required to fully complete the survey. This should lead to an enhanced and comprehensive data from the overseas volunteering sector in Ireland and will allow longitudinal data comparison and trends in volunteering to be captured and analysed over time.

3. About Volunteer Sending Agencies in Ireland

This section of the report analyses the responses to questions relating to the structures of VSAs, the types of volunteering programmes offered, the countries that volunteers went to and demand for international volunteering placements. Additionally, it makes comparisons with data from the 2012 survey where possible. Comhlámh has considerable and long established interaction with VSAs in Ireland, in particular with the VSAs who are signatories to the CoGP. Collating data to create an accurate picture of the state of VSAs in Ireland is important to monitor emerging trends from VSAs in order that Comhlámh, and other interested parties and funders, can respond to any changing needs within the sector and affecting overseas volunteering from Ireland.

Year VSA was founded

Question one in the survey asked what year the VSA was founded: this was an open ended question but the responses have been collated into the same categories as in the 2012 survey and as a result the full range of response dating back centuries is not visible in the table below. The responses to this question allow examination of the growth in the VSA sector in relation to the number of VSAs founded since 2010 and also demonstrate the long, historical tradition in Ireland of VSAs. Forty nine VSAs answered this question and the findings are very similar to the 2012 survey findings.

Table 3. 1 Year Organisation was Founded: Responses to Question One

When was your organisation founded?	Number of VSAs	% VSAs
Pre-1970s	11	22%
1970s-1990s	8	16%
2000s	23	47%
Since 2010	7	14%
Total	49	

Responses ranged over many centuries up to the newest VSAs which were founded in recent years, indicating both a historical legacy of volunteering from Ireland and a dynamic, growing



current sector. Almost half of all VSAs were established in the first decade of this century, with a further 14% set up since 2010. This is very noteworthy, considering the economic crisis that has affected Ireland since 2008. What this data does not show is any VSAs who have ceased operating or who are putting their volunteering programmes on hold for capacity or resource reasons, as these situations are beyond the scope of the survey as it is currently configured. However, analysis of information collected from agencies that are signatories to the Comhlámh CoGP shows that a number of VSAs ceased sending volunteers in 2013 and four VSAs ceased operations in late 2013 or 2014.

Organisational Form of VSAs

Question two asked respondents the type of organisation the VSA is. The vast majority (almost 92% of VSAs) are not-for-profit organisations, with a small percentage (2%) being for profit and 6% identifying themselves in the other category, either as a religious congregation or organisation or a university. Forty nine VSAs answered this question and the responses were very similar to the 2012 survey findings.

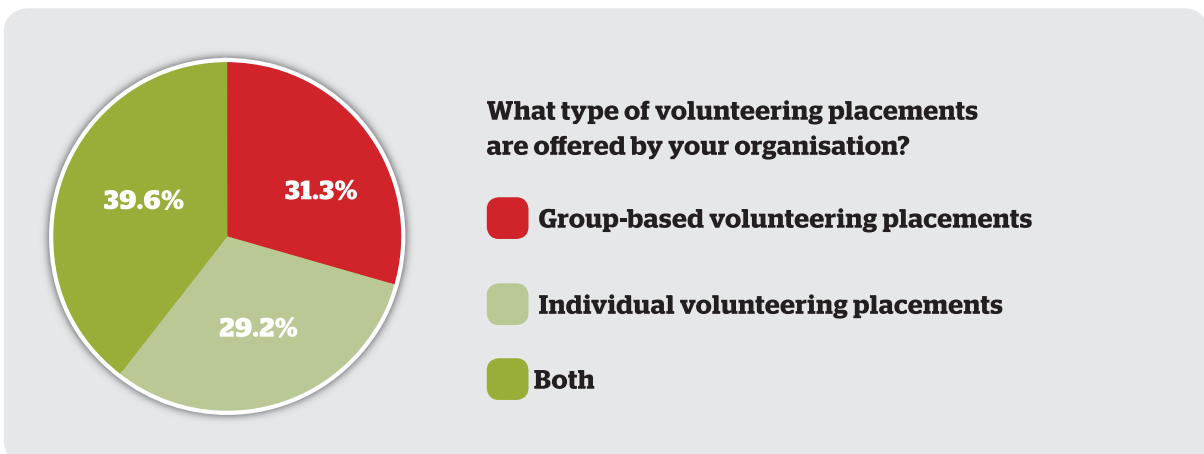
Table 3.2 Type of Organisation: Responses to Question Two

Type of Organisation	Number of VSAs	% VSAs
Not-for-profit	45	92%
For profit	1	2%
Other (please specify)	3	6%

Types of International Volunteering Placements Offered by VSAs

Question three asked “What type of volunteering placements are offered by your organisation?” with a choice of three responses. The results are presented below and show a fairly equal distribution of types of volunteer placements, with 31% of VSAs offering group-based placements and 29% offering individual placements. The majority of VSAs, almost 40%, offered both individual and group placements.

Graph 3.1 Types of Volunteer Placement Offered by VSAs: Responses to Question Three



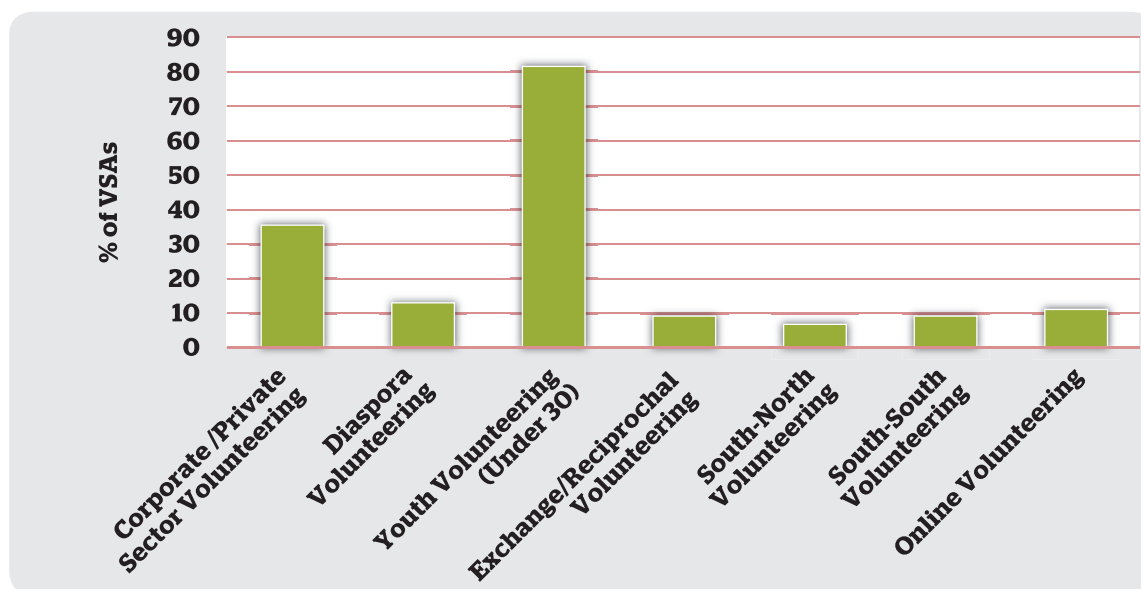
Types of International Volunteering Programmes Offered by VSAs

Question four examined the types of volunteering programmes offered by VSAs with a focus on the typologies of volunteering identified in a 2013 VOSESA report for Comhlámh. A new category of online volunteering, which is a key component of the Irish Aid Volunteering Initiative launched in 2013, was added to the response options for this question. Respondents were also able to complete an “other” section and six VSAs added to their responses describing their volunteering programmes in more detail. Forty five VSAs answered this question, with multiple choice responses a possibility.

Overall, youth volunteering was the most popular response, with more than 80% of VSAs stating they offered it. Corporate/private sector volunteering was selected by almost 36% of respondents while diaspora and online volunteering were offered by 13% and 11% of VSAs who responded respectively. Less frequently reported volunteering typologies are exchange, South to South and South to North programmes. There appears to be considerable growth in the youth, corporate/private sector and diaspora volunteering opportunities offered by VSAs when the data are compared between 2013 and 2012: however, as the question was not structured in an identical manner, it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions. Nevertheless the primacy of youth volunteering amongst the types of volunteering offered by VSAs should be noted and probably reflects the age cohort, those aged less than thirty years, that is most likely to volunteer overseas as reflected in data emerging later in this report.

The increasing trend for corporate volunteering may be linked to VSAs relying on businesses and the private sector for funding. In response to a later question in the survey, almost 43% of VSAs who responded received some funding from businesses in 2013. This could lead to staff volunteering for certain VSAs via links established by corporate donations and may also reflect a growing interest in Corporate Social Responsibility and related staff volunteering opportunities from Irish-based businesses.

Graph 3.2 Types of Volunteering Programmes Offered by VSAs: Responses to Question Four

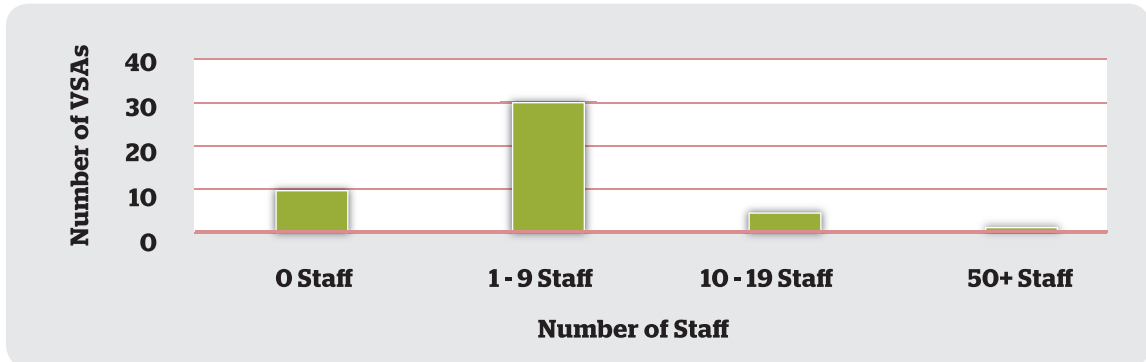


Number of Staff in VSAs

Question five examined the number of staff in Ireland in VSAs at the end of 2013, including full-time and part-time staff. The 2013 data shows 160 full-time employees and 58 part-time employees in the VSAs surveyed, giving a total number of employees at the end of 2013 of 218. The range of total employees in the VSAs that responded to the survey was from one employee up to 60, demonstrating a very wide span of human resources in the Irish offices of VSAs.

It is important to note that ten of the VSAs who answered this question have no staff (they responded as 0) indicating the staffing limitations that VSAs work within and that many VSAs are volunteer led and run. The largest numbers of VSAs are in the staff category of one to nine employees. The question and response format differ to the 2012 survey which combined the numbers of full-time and part-time staff and as a result direct year on year comparisons are not possible. However, when the 2013 responses are pooled and collated a similar picture to the 2012 survey emerges, where the majority of VSAs employed between one to nine staff. Forty six VSAs answered this question.

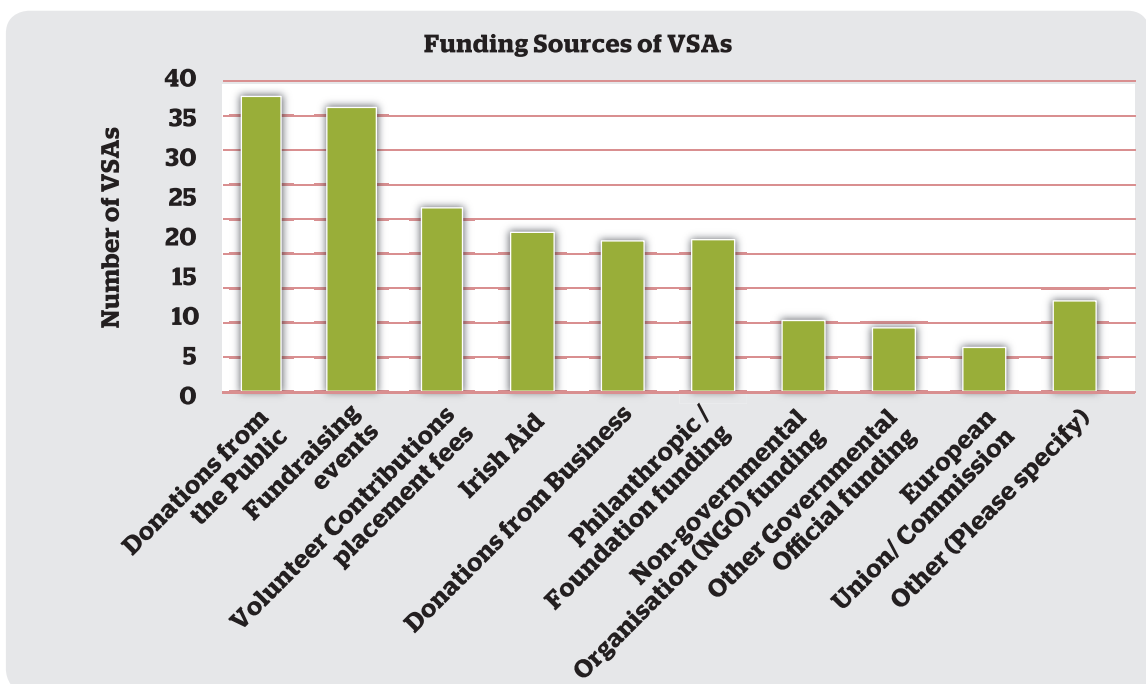
Graph 3.3 Number of Paid Staff in VSA: Responses to Question Five



Funding Sources of VSAs

Question six looked at the funding sources of VSAs. The responses show that VSAs rely on a variety of sources, the most frequently cited being donations from the public and fundraising events, followed by volunteer contribution/placement fees (see Figure 3.4). Almost half of the 47 VSAs who responded receive some funding from Irish Aid. Other sources of funding include donations from businesses and philanthropic funding. In the “other” response category both Mísean Cara and congregational funds were mentioned as funding sources by respondents. These findings are similar to those from the 2012 survey. Forty seven VSAs answered this question.

Graph 3.4 Funding Sources of VSAs: Responses to Question Six



Number of Volunteer Applications Received and Number of Volunteers Wanted in 2013

Question seven looked at the number of applications to each VSA for overseas volunteering placements in 2013. A total of 3,950 applications were received by the VSAs surveyed, similar but slightly higher than the 2012 survey figure of 3,789 applicants. This implies a mean or an average of 84 applications per VSA, slightly lower than the average calculated using the 2012 data. However, a higher percentage of VSAs responded to this question in the 2013 survey. The responses from VSAs ranged from 0 to 863 applicants in 2013 so the median for this data, which is 46, is perhaps more pertinent than the average. Forty seven VSAs answered this question. Results are presented in Table 3.4.

Question eight examines the number of applicants that VSAs aimed or wanted to recruit in 2013. The number of volunteers that VSAs wanted to recruit was 2,270 in 2013, very similar to the figure in the 2012 survey of 2,202. However, this figure is substantially less than the actual number of applicants in 2013 which was 3,950, indicating a high level of interest in international volunteering. Forty six VSAs answered this question. When analysed in conjunction with responses to a later question about the number of volunteers who actually travelled overseas in 2013, there is a substantial difference in figures (see responses to question 13 but responses to this question were lower than those to questions seven and eight). While the reasons for the variation between the number of applicants to VSAs and the final number of international volunteers cannot fully be ascertained through the survey data, anecdotal evidence suggests that the fall off may frequently be due to changing life circumstances during the volunteering application process. This may occur for work, study, health or family related reasons. Another contributing factor to the discrepancy between the figures is rejection of the volunteer applicant by the VSA, because of a mismatch of volunteer skills and host partner or community skill requirement. Additionally, it is reasonable to suggest that in some cases, volunteers are applying to multiple VSAs for volunteering placements initially and then deciding on a specific VSA and volunteering opportunity later in the process. The findings from question 13 are discussed in more detail in Section 4 of this report.

Table 3.3 Number of Applicants to VSAs, Number of Volunteers Wanted by VSAs and Number of Volunteers in 2013: Responses to Questions Seven, Eight and Thirteen.

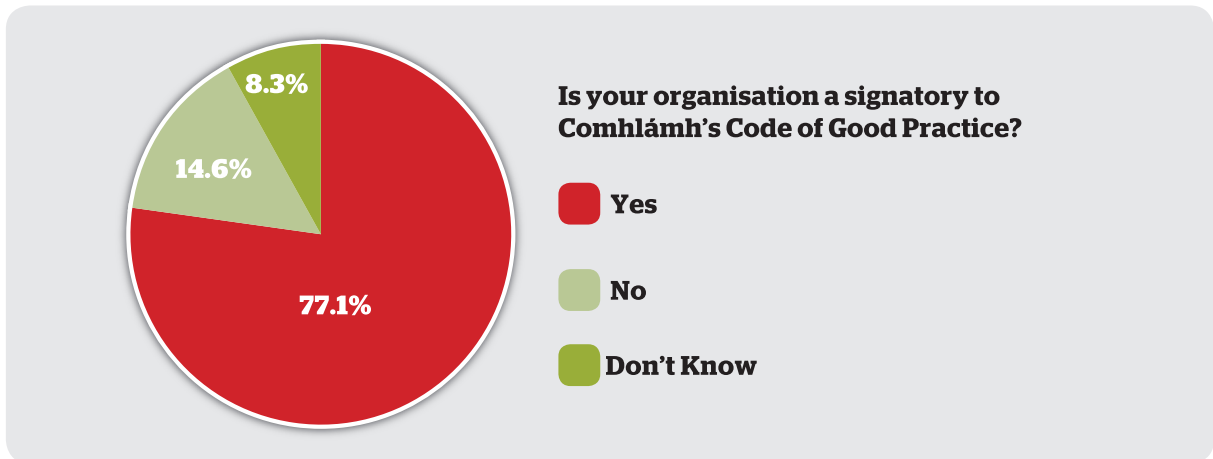
Q.7	Number of applications to your organisation in 2013 for overseas volunteering placements?	3,950
Q.8	Number of overseas volunteers your organisation aimed or wanted to recruit in 2013?	2,270
Q.13	Number of volunteers send abroad by your organisation in 2013 by sex? (total responses added)	1,728

Signatory status to Comhlámh's Code of Good Practice for Volunteer Sending Agencies

Question nine asked if the VSA completing the survey was a signatory to Comhlámh's Code of Good Practice for Volunteer Sending Agencies (CoGP). This question was not included in the 2012 survey so no comparisons between the data are possible. The large majority of VSAs who responded to this question were CoGP signatories (77%) with smaller amounts stating they were not signatories (14%) and a very small number stating that they did not know (8%). The extremely high percentage of VSAs that are signatories to the CoGP demonstrates

the commitment of many Irish VSAs to its principles and to working to ensure responsible, sustainable and responsive volunteering. As being a signatory to the CoGP entails, amongst other commitments, gathering information on volunteering programmes and monitoring volunteering activities, a greater level of data could be anticipated from the survey respondents who are also CoGP signatories. However, due to the anonymous nature of this research it is not possible to segregate the responses based on CoGP signatory status. Forty eight VSAs answered this question.

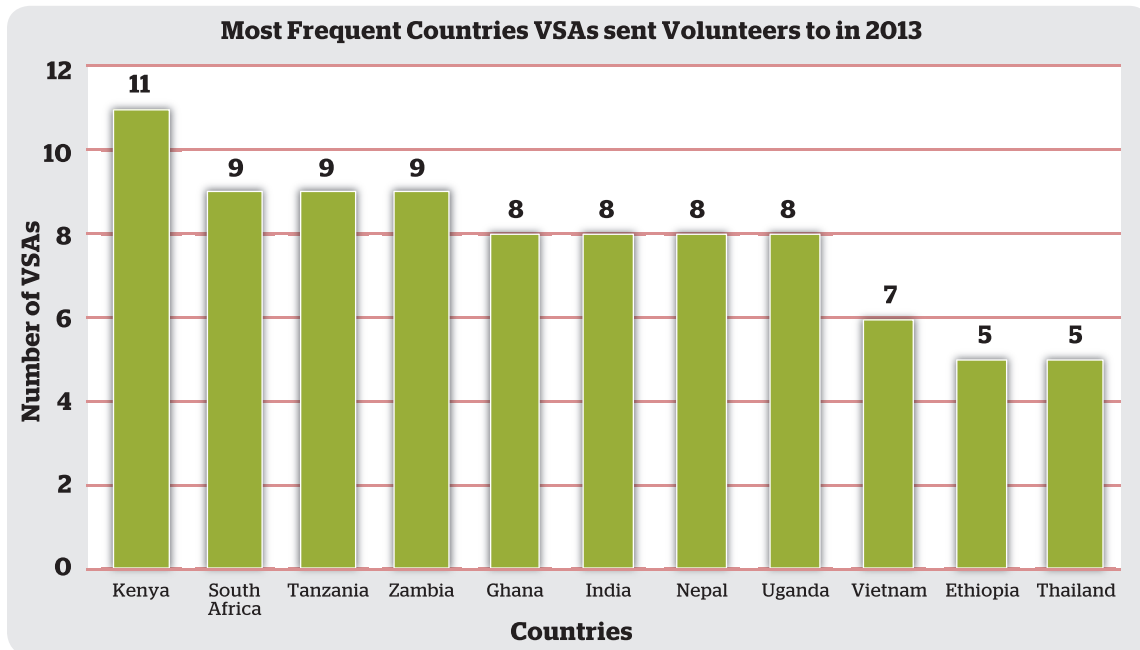
Graph 3.5 Signatories to Comhlámh’s Code of good Practice: Responses to Question Nine



Volunteer Recipient Countries in 2013

Question ten examined the countries to which volunteers from Ireland travelled in 2013. Volunteers from Ireland went to 47 countries in 2013 demonstrating the global reach of Irish volunteering: 20 of these countries were on the continent of Africa, 12 in the South and Central America and Caribbean region and ten on the continent of Asia. All Irish Aid Key Partner countries (Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam and Zambia) received volunteers from Ireland in 2013. These Key Partner countries are countries that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade concentrate Irish governmental development support on and most of Ireland’s Key Partner countries are located in sub-Saharan Africa. Since the 2012 survey Timor Leste is no longer an Irish Aid Partner country and Sierra Leone has joined the list. Forty seven VSAs answered this question. The results of this question are presented in graphs 3.6 and 3.7. Further data breakdown is available in Appendix V which categorises the countries that Irish volunteers went to in 2013 by DAC (Development Assistance Committee of the OECD) List status. Over time the responses to this question should allow for the analysis of trends in relation to where Irish volunteers are placed overseas: preliminary trends can be seen, with the number of VSAs sending volunteers to Haiti dropping from six in 2012 to four in 2013.

Graph 3.6 Most Frequent Countries VSAs sent Volunteers to: Responses to Question Ten



Graph 3.7 Numbers of VSAs Sending Volunteers to Irish Aid Key Partner Countries: Responses to Question Ten



Changes in Interest in Overseas Volunteering

Question 11 examined any increases or decreases in interest in overseas volunteering as reported by VSAs. The respondents were asked to compare the levels of interest (as expressed by number of applications, enquiries etc.) between 2012 and 2013. Almost 43% of VSAs reported no change in interest; almost 26% reported an increase in interest and 21% a decline in interest. The numbers of VSAs reporting significant increase or decline in interest in 2013 or

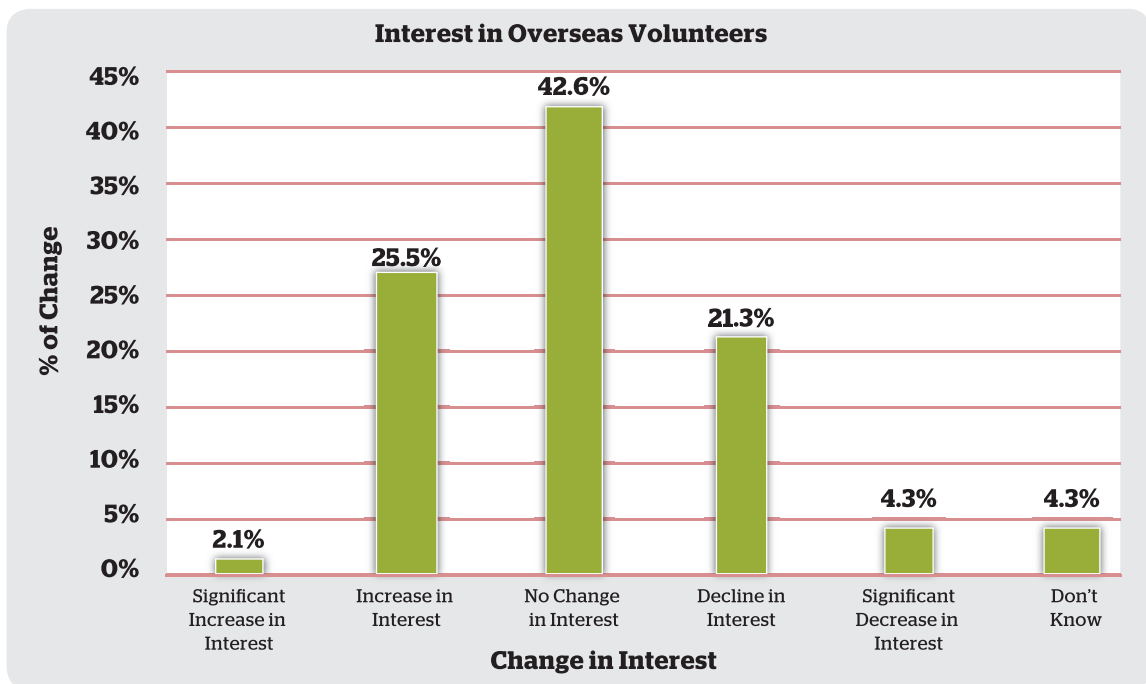


who responded don't know are nominal. When comparing the data from 2012 both a higher significant decline and a higher significant increase were reported by VSAs that year when compared with the 2013 figures. Forty seven VSAs answered this question.

The 2013 survey allowed respondents to add their comments to this question and sixteen VSAs added their opinions as to why changes in interest may have occurred in 2013. The comments were equally divided between explanations for both declines and increases in interest and can be categorised as follows:

- Factors relating to a noted decline in interest included the financial costs of volunteering, with the volunteer fee or contribution being a deterrent combined with the impact of the economic crisis in Ireland, youth emigration and the demand for employment opportunities over volunteering opportunities.
- Factors relating to a noted increase in interest included increased and targeted marketing by VSAs resulting in better awareness of the VSA by potential volunteers and niche, VSAs becoming better known and more established or VSAs offering skill specific volunteering opportunities with targeted recruitment.

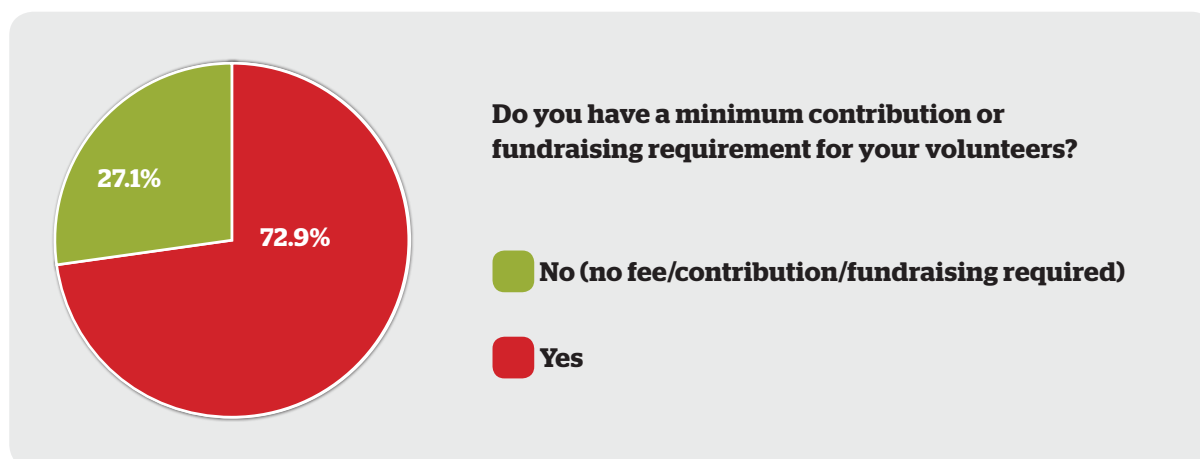
Graph 3.8 Changes in Interest in Overseas Volunteering: Responses to Question 11



Volunteer Financial Contribution to VSA

Question 12 asked VSAs if they have a fee, minimum contribution or fundraising requirement for their volunteers. The majority of VSAs, 73% or 35 of the VSAs who responded, have a fee or fundraising requirement while the remainder 27%, or 13 VSAs, do not. Forty eight VSAs answered this question.

Graph 3.9 Fee or Contribution Requirement from Volunteers: Responses to Question 12



The average fee/contribution/fundraising requirement per volunteer was also asked as part of question 12 and 33 VSAs provided this information. As some of the respondents gave information based on a range of different calculations (e.g. number of weeks or months the volunteer was overseas, inclusion or exclusion of flight expenses and country of destination variations in charges), it is very difficult to calculate an average figure. The figures emerging from the data on fees charged or fundraising requirements amongst the VSA respondents ranged from €140 to €4,500, with additional comments to explain variations based on factors relating to the specific circumstances of the volunteer placement such as length of time and destination.

Based on the responses to question six where 60% of VSAs stated they receive funding through volunteer contributions and fees, the importance of this funding source to VSAs needs to be recognised. However, the qualitative responses to question 11 indicate that the financial costs of volunteering, especially in a challenging economic environment, are a possible deterrent to potential volunteers and could be a barrier to recruiting inclusive overseas volunteer cohorts from Ireland. This issue will be discussed further later in the report.

Summary and Concluding Remarks

A summary of the responses from VSAs to the 2013 survey section “About your organisation and volunteering programme” which consisted of questions one to twelve is presented below.

- The majority of VSAs who participated in the 2013 survey have been founded since 2000 and despite the economic crisis, seven new VSAs have opened since 2010. This indicates a desire and demand for overseas volunteering opportunities in Ireland. At the same time, the number of VSAs that have ceased operations or who are putting their volunteering programmes on hold for capacity or resource reasons cannot be ascertained from the survey data but we know from CoGP signatories that a number of VSAs stopped sending volunteers in 2013 and at least four VSAs ceased operations overall.
- The vast majority of VSAs are not-for-profit organisations, almost 92% of VSAs surveyed categorised themselves as such.
- The types of volunteering placements offered by VSAs include individual and group placements with the majority of VSAs, 40%, offering both.

- Youth volunteering emerged as by far the most frequently offered type of volunteering programme in the survey with over 80% of VSAs offering youth volunteering in their programmes. Other forms such as corporate, diaspora and online modalities of volunteering are also offered, although by smaller numbers of VSAs. However, there appears to be growth in the numbers of VSAs offering corporate and diaspora volunteering programmes when the survey results for 2012 and 2013 are compared.
- The majority of VSAs have between one and nine staff members (combining both full-time and part-time staff). However, over 25% of the VSAs surveyed have no staff and as a result are volunteer led and run. This is a significant proportion of VSAs and demonstrates the commitment of volunteers to supporting VSAs within Ireland as well as overseas.
- VSAs rely on a variety of funding sources, the most important of which are donations from the public, fundraising events and volunteer contributions or placement fees.
- A total of 3,950 applications for volunteer placements were received in 2013 by the 47 VSAs who answered this question. This exceeded the number of volunteers that VSAs wanted to recruit in 2013 which was 2,270. This indicates a substantial interest in and demand for international volunteering placements in 2013 in Ireland.
- The majority of VSAs, 77%, completing the survey are signatories to the Comhlámh Code of Good Practice.
- Volunteers from Ireland worked in 47 countries in 2013 and all Irish Aid Key Partner countries: Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam and Zambia, received volunteers from Ireland in 2013.
- Most VSAs, 43%, reported no change in interest in volunteering between 2012 and 2013. Reasons given for any reported decline in interest in volunteering from VSAs related to the cost of volunteering and the impact of the recession in Ireland. Reasons given for reported increase in interest in volunteering were more targeted marketing by the VSA and a resultant increase in awareness of the VSA and its volunteer programmes.
- The majority of VSAs surveyed, 73%, have a fee, minimum contribution or fundraising requirement for their volunteers. The amount varies widely between VSAs often depending on the location and time length of the volunteering placement.

In conclusion, there is considerable activity amongst VSAs in Ireland, with many new VSAs opening in the past few years demonstrating interest in and demand for international volunteering. Most of the VSAs who answered the survey are signatories to the Comhlámh Code of Good Practice which would indicate a willingness to commit to and measure good practice in overseas volunteering. Youth volunteering is the most frequently offered form of volunteering programme emerging from the data: additionally, a growth in corporate volunteering and diaspora volunteering programmes being offered was noted between 2012 and 2013. VSAs have a range of funding sources, the most important of which are donations from the public, fundraising events and volunteer placement fees with 73% of VSAs having a fee or minimum contribution. Volunteers from Ireland travelled to many countries for their volunteer placements; the majority of them were on the continent of Africa. The number of applicants to VSAs for volunteer placements exceeded the number of volunteers desired by VSAs in 2013 showing a strong interest in international volunteering opportunities.

4. Profile of Overseas Volunteers

This section of the report examines who volunteered overseas from Ireland in 2013 and their employment and educational status. It additionally discusses the demographic profile of volunteers and the nature and length of their volunteering activities whilst overseas. The response rates for many of the questions in this section of the survey were lower than the previous section examining the structure of VSAs and types of volunteering offered. This may be due to the data not being collected or disaggregated by VSAs or time and staff pressures for VSAs in relation to completing the 2013 survey. The lower response rates for various questions imply that in some cases definitive conclusions or statistically significant responses will not be possible.

Number of Overseas Volunteers by Sex in 2013

Question 13 looked at the breakdown of volunteers from Ireland in 2013 by sex. VSAs reported a higher number of female volunteers (almost double) than male volunteers, which does not correspond to the figures presented in the 2012 survey but is broadly similar to the multi-annual in-house data collated from the CoGP signatories self-audits by Comhlámh. It is also similar to Volunteering Ireland figures from 2013, which indicated that two thirds of those signed up to volunteer domestically were female. This finding suggests that greater efforts are required to have a better balance between male and female overseas volunteers from Ireland, possibly through recruitment methods and targeted promotion and advertising of volunteering opportunities.

When examining the data from question 13 and adding the figures given by respondents for male and female volunteers in 2013, there appears to be a decrease in the total number of volunteers in 2013 when compared with 2012, from 2,120 volunteers in 2012 to 1,728 in 2013. This decrease could arise for a number of reasons;

- Some VSAs could not send volunteers overseas in 2013 due to natural disasters, infection outbreaks or civil unrest in countries where they would usually have established volunteering programmes;
- Feedback from open questions in both the 2012 and the 2013 surveys suggest that the current economic situation in Ireland may make it more challenging for potential volunteers to take time away from their work, studies or job hunting to volunteer overseas;
- The skills required by VSAs for certain volunteer placements may not correlate with the skills applicant volunteers have, as a result applicants may not be suitable for the placements on offer.

Thirty eight VSAs answered this question giving the question a response rate of 76%. This is lower than other questions in the survey which leads to data missing that could possibly shed more light

on the sex differentials emerging from the responses. Further discussion related to question 13 is found in the survey responses to question 23, later in the report.

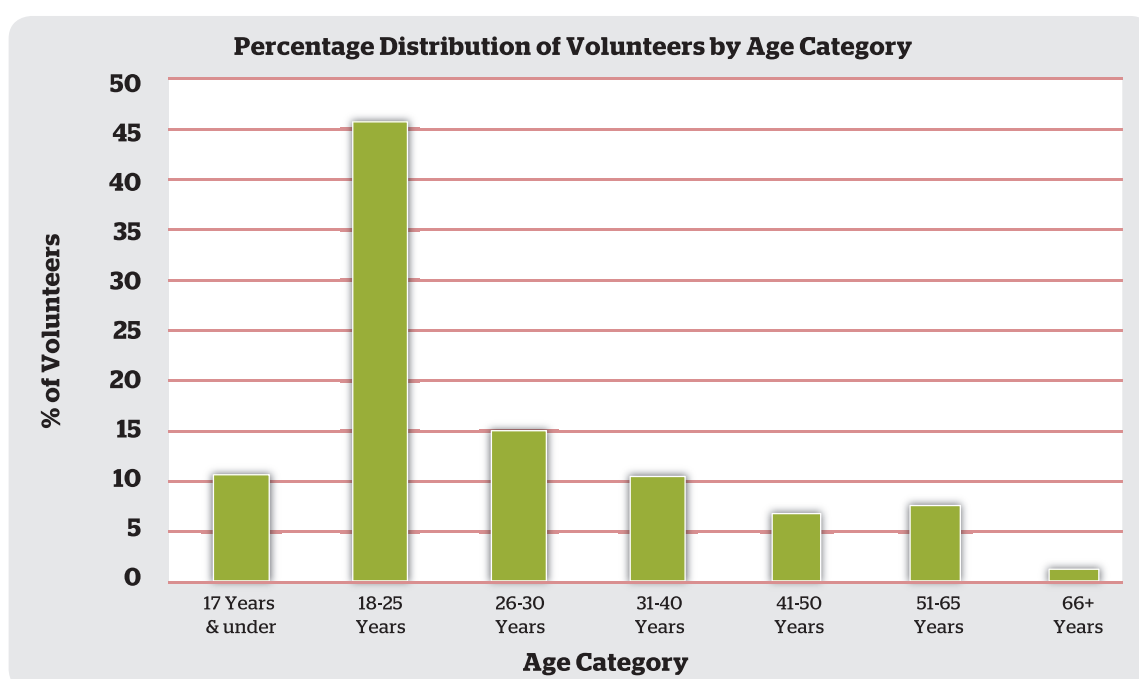
Table 4.1 Number of Volunteers in 2013: Responses to Question 13

Number of volunteers sent abroad by your organisation in 2013 by sex.		
Females	Males	Total
1,137	591	1,728

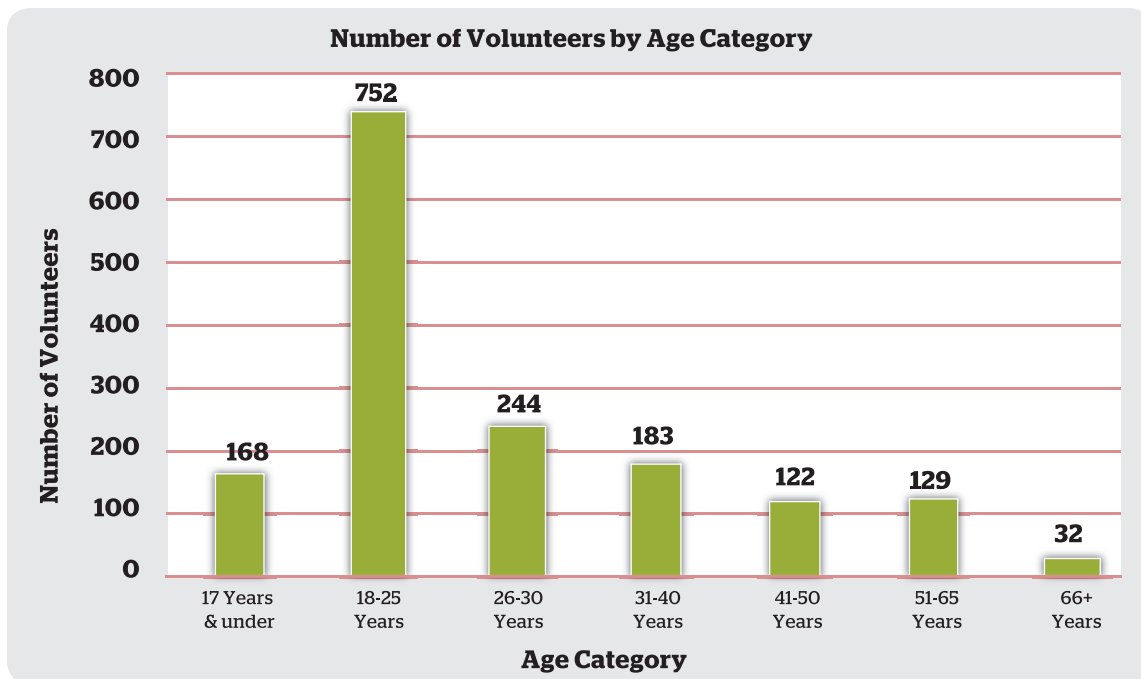
Number of Overseas Volunteers by Age Category

Question 14 examines the number of volunteers by their age category. The categories provided for responses differ to the 2012 survey as they allow for more analysis of the range of ages of volunteers and also correspond to age categories in the CoGP self-audit tool which allows for internal cross-referencing of data. However, this does lead to limited analysis between the 2012 and 2013 surveys. The responses to the 2013 survey show that the majority of volunteers were aged between 18 and 25 years old (numbering 752), with the second largest volunteer cohort aged between 26 and 30 years old (numbering 244) demonstrating that the significant majority of volunteers in Ireland are younger than 30. Data on volunteers aged under 18 was collected in the survey showing a similar number of young volunteers (numbering 168) as volunteers aged 31 to 40 years old (numbering 183). Despite volunteering being a lifelong activity the numbers of volunteers reported in this survey declines after age 40, with the smallest age group of volunteers in the 66 plus age (numbering 32) category which is comparable to the 2012 findings. When examined and juxtaposed with the 2012 survey data an increased growth in the 29 and under age category of volunteers emerged in 2013. This age cohort has increased from approximately 50% of the 2012 volunteers to 71% of volunteers in 2013 (aged 30 and under). This year on year change in age groups of volunteers may also reflect different VSAs programmes, not all of which operate on an annual basis. The strong youth dimension of international volunteering is reflected in the programmes offered by VSAs, as seen in the responses to question four and the age cohorts volunteering from Ireland in 2013 emerging in the responses to question 14.

Graph 4.1 Percentage Distribution of Volunteers by Age Category: Responses to Question 14



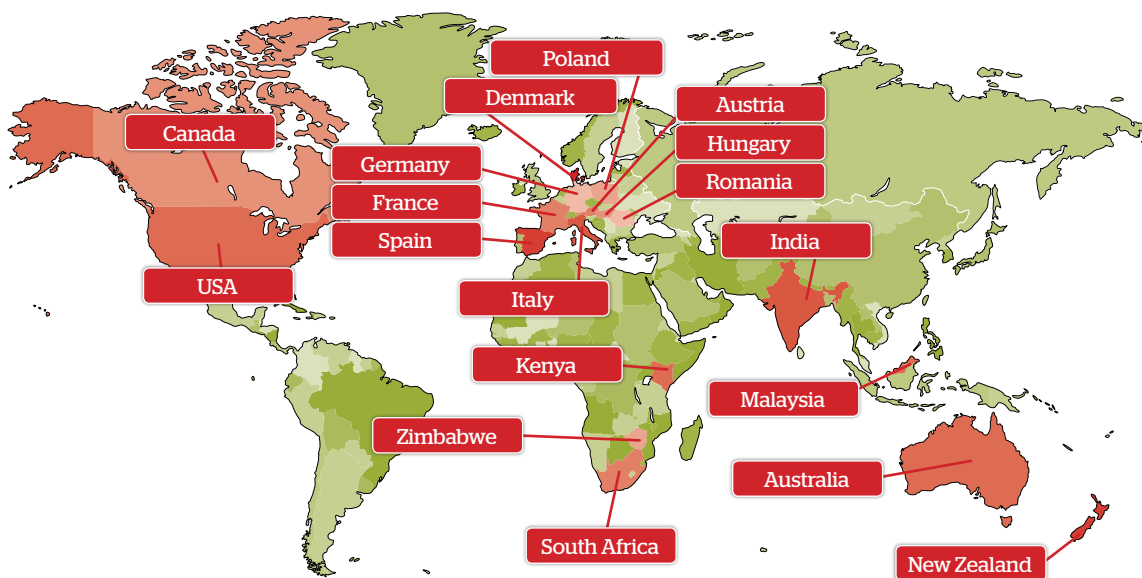
Graph 4.2 Number of Volunteers by Age Category: Responses to Question 14



Number of Overseas Volunteers by Nationality

Question 15 examined the nationality of volunteers travelling from Ireland overseas. Overall the data is very similar to the 2012 survey where the majority of volunteers were Irish (almost 90%) and smaller numbers of volunteers were nationals from the UK, the European Union Member States and countries beyond Europe. There were a wide range of nationalities of volunteers, although in small numbers, emerging in the responses to this question as can be seen in the map below.

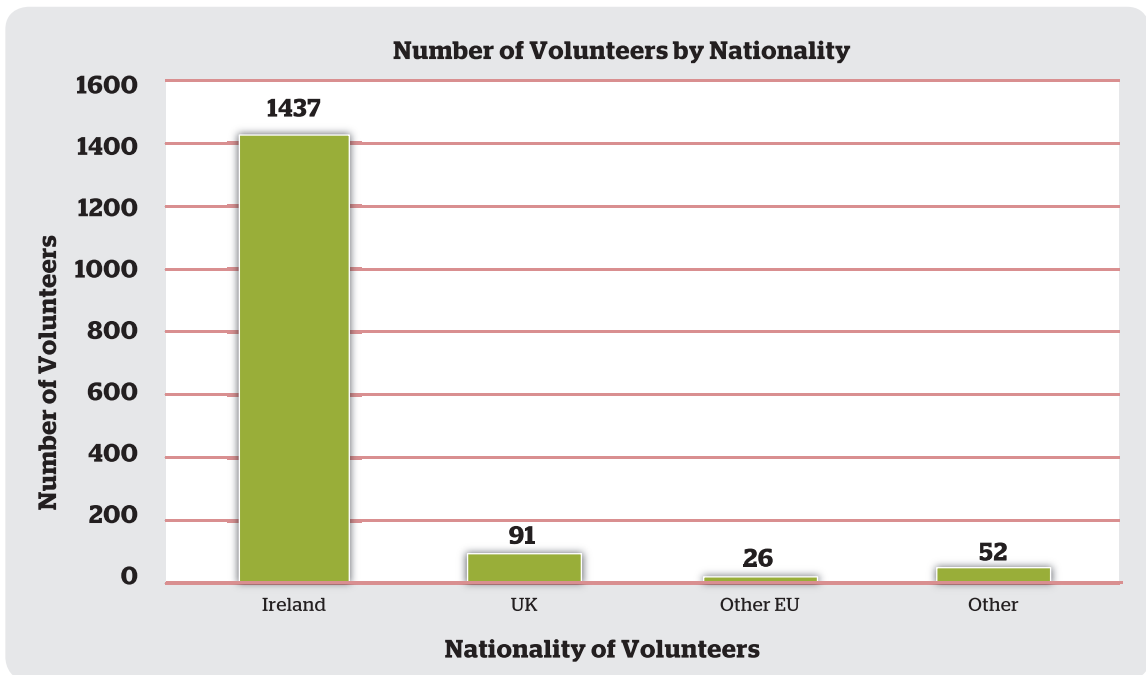
Figure 4.1 Map of Nationalities of Volunteers in 2013



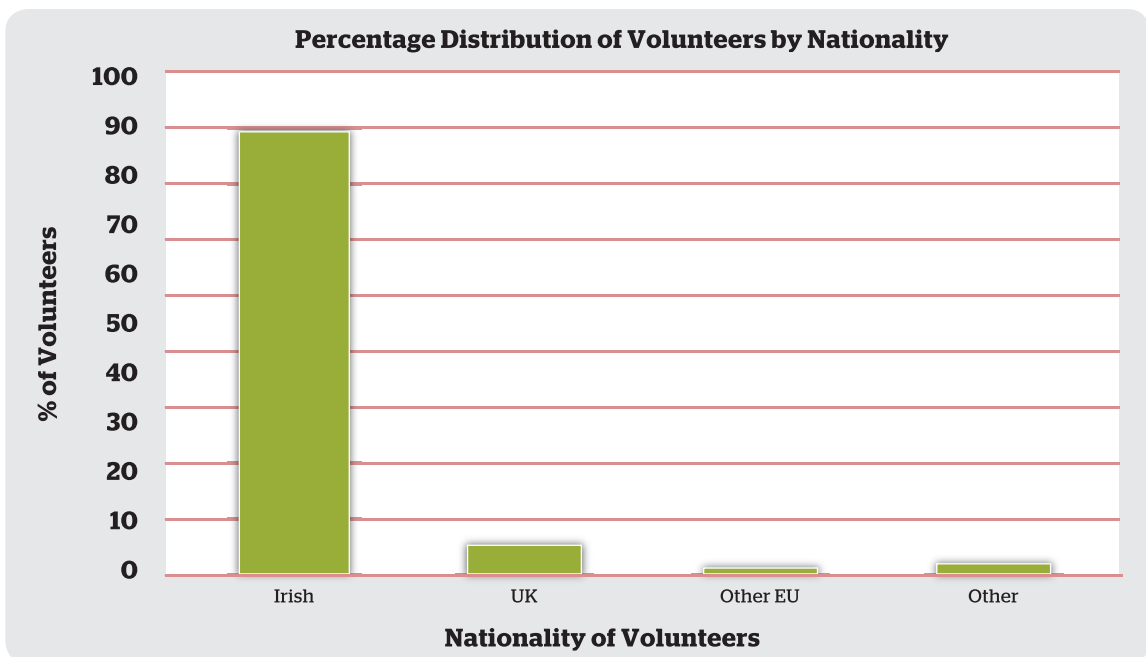
The nationality of volunteers is of interest in relation to monitoring future diaspora volunteering trends (where possible based on stated nationality of the volunteer) and also to assess if it reflects the population changes that have occurred in Ireland as seen in the national census produced by the Central Statistics Office. Thirty five VSAs answered this question.



Graph 4.3 Number of Volunteers by Nationality: Responses to Question 15



Graph 4.4 Percentage Distribution of Volunteers by Nationality: Responses to Question 15



Duration of Volunteer Placement

Question 16 looked at the duration of volunteering placements overseas in 2013. Again the response options were rephrased slightly from the previous 2012 survey to allow for more detailed data collection and analysis. The majority of volunteers in 2013 were on placements for between two and four weeks duration (40% of volunteers). The second largest group of volunteers were overseas for less than two weeks (37% of volunteers), implying that the vast majority, 77%, of volunteer placements are for a month or less and could be defined as a very short-term volunteering placement. Volunteering placements for more than a month

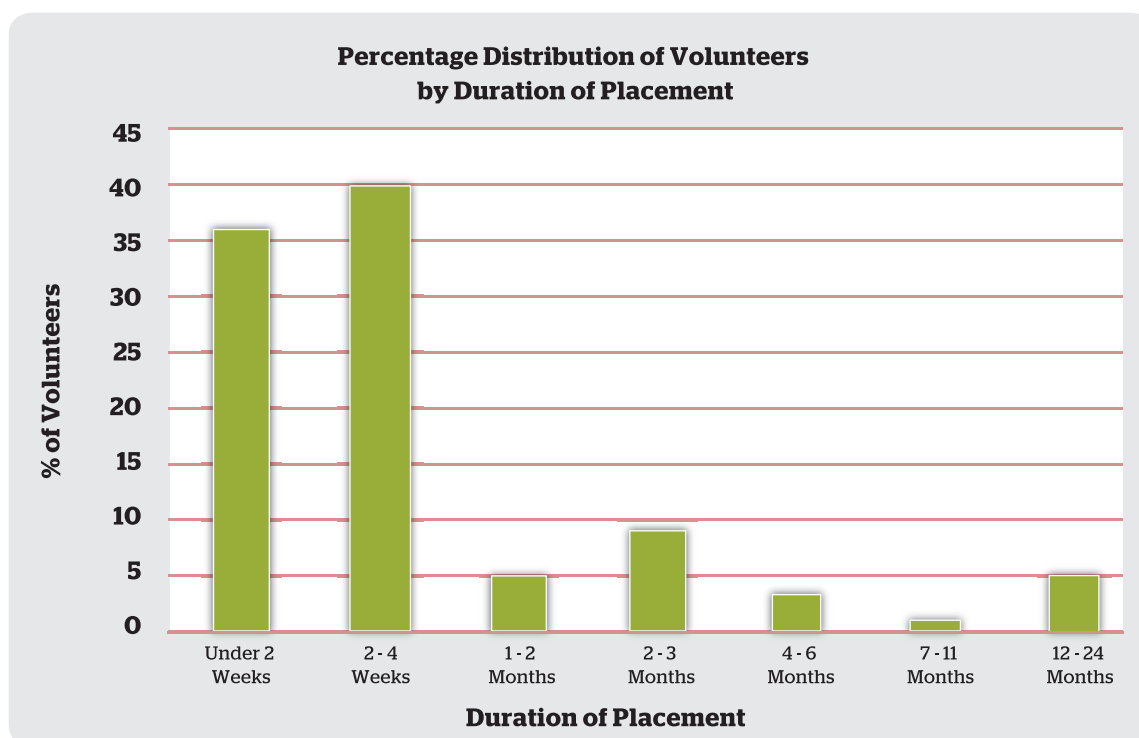
emerge much less frequently in the data. In relation to longer term placements, there were 93 volunteers overseas for between 12 to 24 months which account for almost 6% of the volunteers listed in the response to this question. These findings are comparable to the 2012 data where again the majority of volunteering placements, 70%, were for one month or less and about 6% were for 12 months or more. Thirty six VSAs answered this question.

The demand for short-term international volunteering opportunities could relate to time limitations for volunteers and attempts to fit volunteering placements into busy work, family, academic or school schedules. The predominance of very short-term volunteering placements emerging in this research needs to be examined in relation to the potential longer term impact of these placements on both the host community and the volunteer and the potential contribution to sustainable development, if any, as a result. It also highlights the need to support the continuous engagement of returned volunteers if any longer-term impacts are to be realised as a result of very short-term volunteering placements overseas.

Table 4.2 Duration of Volunteering Placement: Responses to Question 16

Duration of Placement	Number of Volunteers
Number of volunteers overseas for under 2 weeks	610
Number of volunteers overseas for 2 to 4 weeks	658
Number of volunteers overseas for 1 to 2 months	90
Number of volunteers overseas for 2 to 3 months	140
Number of volunteers overseas for 4 to 6 months	40
Number of volunteers overseas for 7 to 11 months	12
Number of volunteers overseas for 12 to 24 months	93

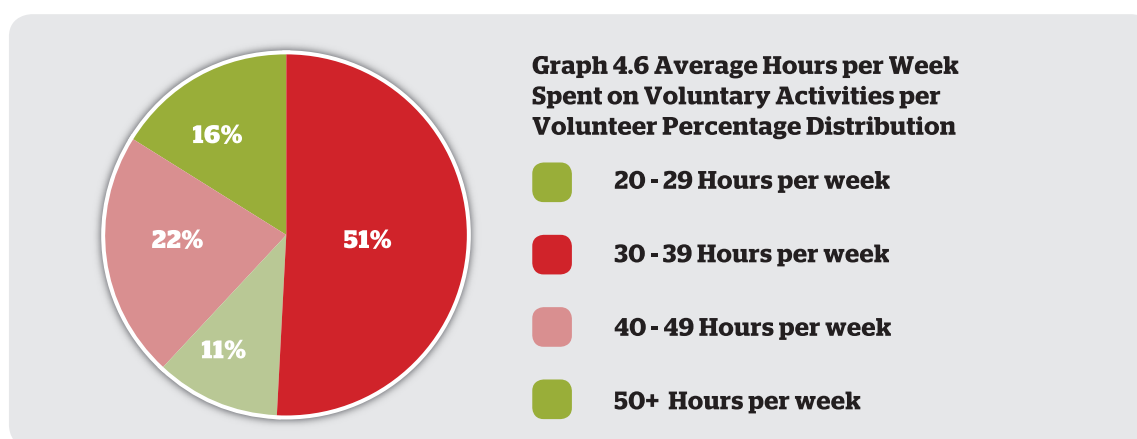
Graph 4.5 Percentage Distribution of Volunteers by Duration of Placement: Responses to Question 16



Average Number of Hours Spent per Week on Voluntary Activities per Volunteer

Question 17 examines the average number of hours spent per week on voluntary activities per volunteer. This allows for analysis of the contribution of volunteers in relation to their placements and also indicates that the time committed to volunteering while overseas is comparable to, or greater than, the demands of a full-time job. Similarly to the findings in the 2012 survey, VSAs estimate that 73% of their volunteers worked between 30 and 49 hours per week during their volunteer placements in 2013. Thirty seven VSAs answered this question.

Graph 4.6 Average Hours per Week Spent on Voluntary Activities per Volunteer Percentage Distribution



Activities that Volunteers Participated in During their Placement

Question 18 examined the roles and activities that volunteers participated in during their volunteer placement. VSAs were asked to identify all the activities their volunteers participated in, to capture as broad as possible a picture of volunteer activity overseas and as a result, the range of responses is extensive. The greatest numbers of responses were in the areas of:

- Teaching/training;
- Children/youth development;
- Capacity building;
- Medicine and healthcare;
- Community development.

There are some variations between the responses given in the 2012 survey, perhaps indicating different VSAs being more or less active in 2013 which would lead to a greater or lesser focus on certain volunteer roles and activities. The results of the 2012 survey showed the activities that volunteers were most active in as being: building and construction; community development; children/youth development; agriculture /food security and capacity building. The principal difference between the data from the two surveys is the change in rankings of building and construction and medicine and healthcare. This change possibly reflects different VSAs with varied foci sending greater or fewer volunteers on an annual basis. While some annual variations are to be expected more longitudinal data in the coming years should give a more robust picture of any changes in volunteering activities. The high numbers of volunteers and VSAs active in the areas of teaching, children and youth development, disability and special needs advocacy in both 2013 and 2012 would indicate a responsibility on the sending VSAs to ensure child and vulnerable adult protection procedures, policies and training are in place for volunteers, host communities and VSA staff. Thirty eight VSAs answered this question.

Graph 4.7 Activities Volunteers Participated in During their Placement: Responses to Question 18

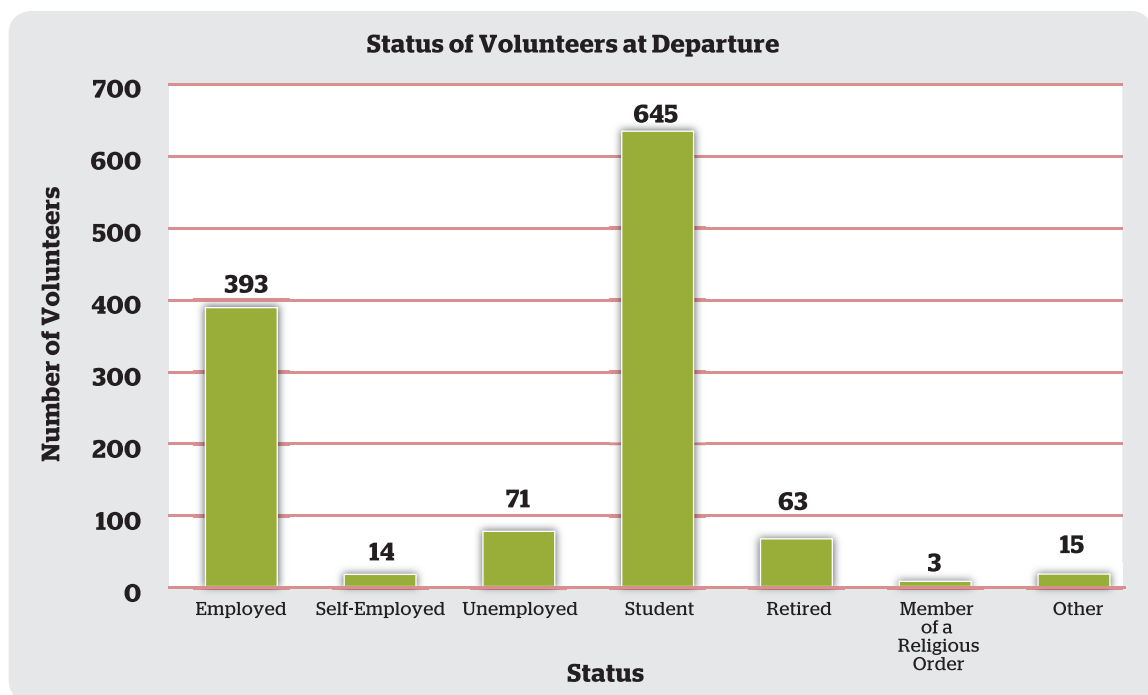


Status of Volunteers

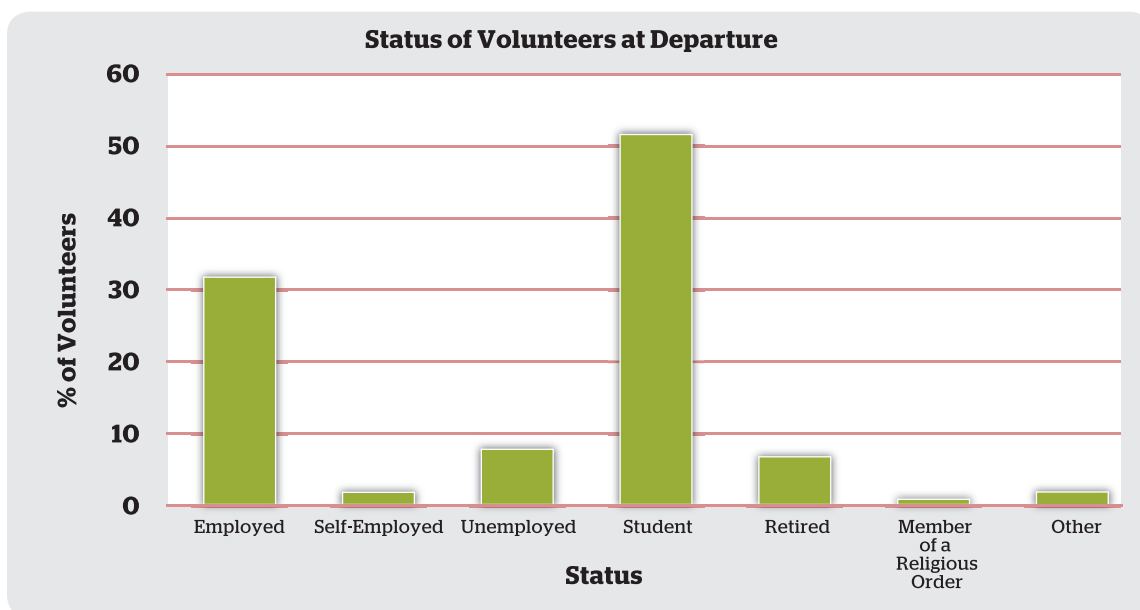
Question 19 looked at the status of the volunteers at the time of their departure. The response categories were expanded, building on the 2012 survey analysis and with collaboration from the Central Statistics Office, to include a new category of “Member of a religious order”. The responses to question 19 are presented in Graph 4.8 below. The majority of volunteers were classified as students (numbering 645 or 54%) and the second most popular classification was employed (numbering 393 or 33%). When employed and self-employed volunteers are collated they account for 34% of volunteers. Significantly lower numbers of volunteers were classified as unemployed, retired or members of a religious order by VSAs. Thirty six VSAs answered this question, but six stated that they do not collect this information, meaning that the number of volunteers we can attribute to this question response relates to thirty VSAs, resulting in a lower overall number of volunteers than stated in responses to previous questions.

The high levels of students and employees amongst international volunteers from Ireland may stimulate demand for short or very short-term volunteering placements, which can be undertaken during holidays from work, school, college or university. The level of employees amongst overseas volunteers may indicate some flexibility on the part of employers to support international volunteering amongst their staff through leave or sponsorship or may in some instances correlate to the availability of corporate/private sector volunteering programmes in workplaces that emerged in the responses to question four in the survey.

Graph 4.8 Status of Volunteers at Departure: Responses to Question 19



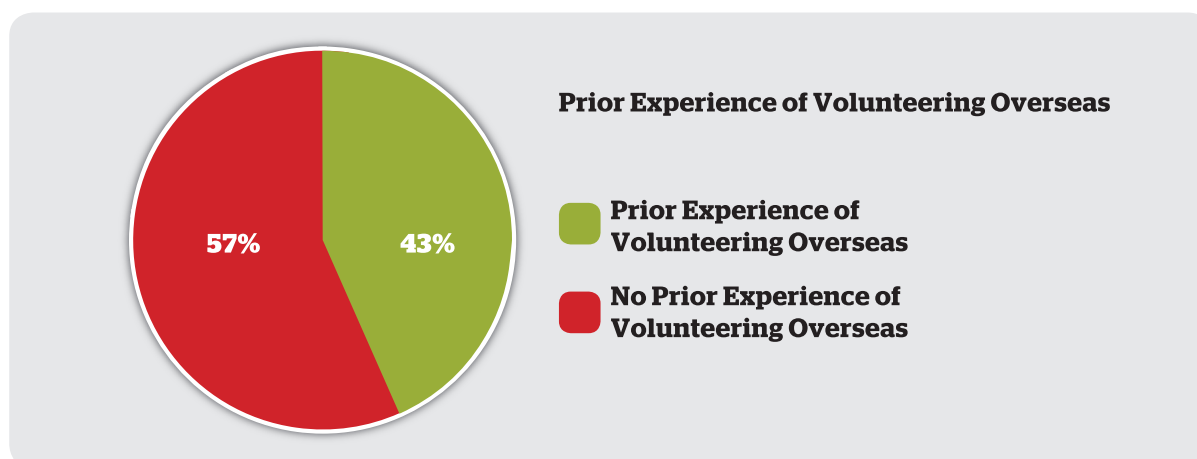
Graph 4.9 Percentage Distribution of Volunteers by Status at Departure: Responses to Question 19



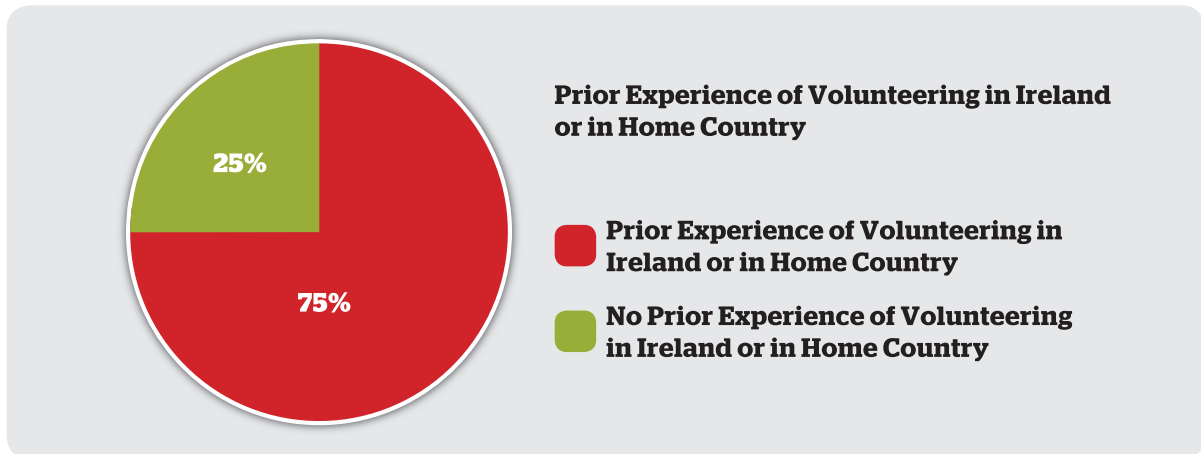
Prior Experience of Volunteering

Questions 20 and 21 examined prior volunteering experience, both international and in Ireland, of volunteers going overseas in 2013. There were a higher proportion of volunteers who had no prior experience of overseas volunteering, 57%, than those who had previously volunteered overseas in 2013, 43%. This is the inverse result of the 2012 survey, where 48% of volunteers had no prior experience and 52% had previous experience of international volunteering, perhaps demonstrating an increase of new, first time overseas volunteers in 2013 but still a substantial proportion of repeat overseas volunteers. In relation to domestic volunteering the majority of volunteers (75%) had prior experience of volunteering in Ireland or their home country. This echoes the 2012 data findings where 62% had experience of volunteering in Ireland and could demonstrate a positive correlation between both domestic and overseas volunteering and possibly a level of domestic volunteering than may continue when the volunteer returns back to Ireland. The responses are presented in Table 4.3 and graphs 4.8 and 4.9. It is possible to assume that many VSAs do not collect this data, as the response rates to these questions were particularly low (34 and 35 VSAs answered questions 20 and 21 respectively), and a number of VSAs completed the “Don’t know” response sections for both questions.

Graph 4.10 Prior Experience of International Volunteering: Responses to Question 20 (don’t knows excluded)



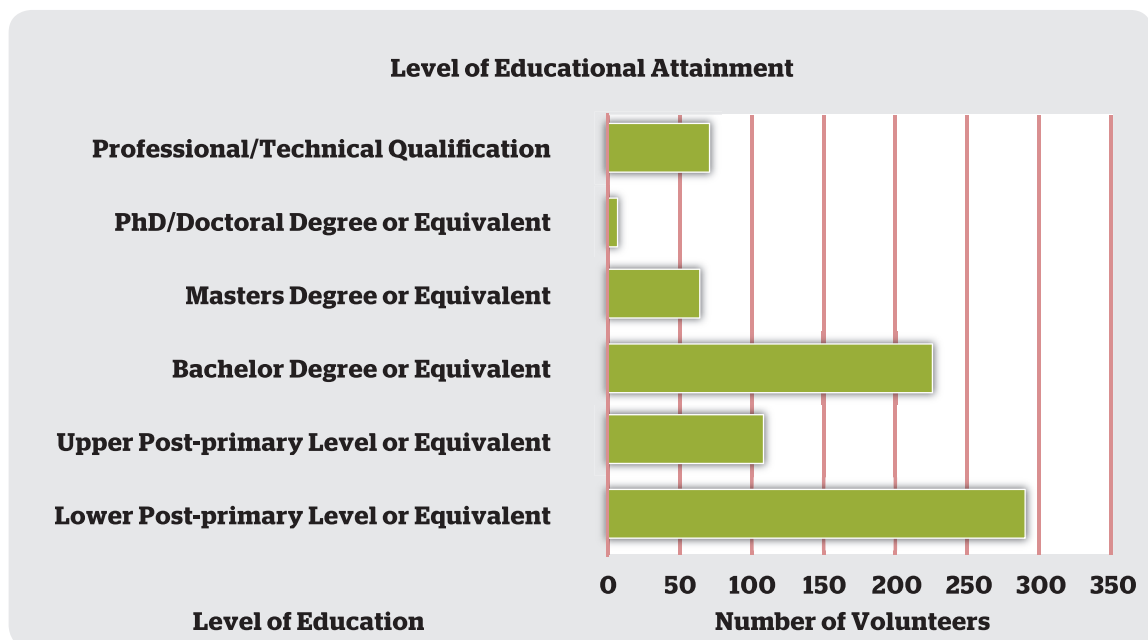
Graph 4.11 Prior Experience of Domestic Volunteering: Responses to Question 21 (don't knows excluded)



Educational Attainment of Volunteers

Question 22 looked at the educational attainment of volunteers travelling overseas in 2013. Thirty six VSAs answered this question, of which 14 stated that they do not collect this information, therefore the overall number of responses (22 VSAs) and as a result data from which to draw conclusions is very low. The highest number of volunteers reported by VSAs in relation to education status are in the “lower post-primary cycle category or have completed their Junior Certificate” category at 291 volunteers. This large cohort of volunteers possibly represents second level student volunteering programmes going overseas from Ireland or international volunteering programmes for under 18s, but it is important to note that schools were not part of the target sample for the survey, only VSAs. The next largest group is the Bachelor degree level of educational attainment at 226 volunteers. There were no volunteers recorded who only had primary level education. There are smaller amounts of volunteers in the higher levels of tertiary education and professional qualifications response categories, findings that are similar to the 2012 survey results. Overall the majority of volunteers as recorded in the responses to question 22 have some sort third level education qualification (numbering 371).

Graph 4.12 Number of Volunteers by Level of Educational Attainment: Responses to Question 22



Summary and Concluding Remarks

A summary of the findings from this section of the 2013 survey is presented below.

- Thirty eight VSAs sent 1,728 male and female volunteers overseas from Ireland in 2013, a slight decrease in the figure emerging from the 2012 data which was 2,120 volunteers. Of the 1,728 volunteers in 2013 66% were female and 34% were male. However, these figures need to be treated with some degree of caution as only 38 VSAs answered the question. The difference between the number of men and women volunteering does require some further analysis and longitudinal research to fully understand this finding and to examine if it is a continuing trend.
- The majority of volunteers from Ireland in 2013 (46%) were aged between 18 and 25 years. The second largest cohort of volunteers by age breakdown was those aged between 26 and 30 years at 15%. The survey results demonstrate that the vast majority, 71%, of volunteers in 2013 were aged less than 30 years. There are much smaller cohorts of volunteers over 66 (less than 2%).
- Most volunteers in 2013 were Irish (almost 90%) with smaller amounts from the UK, Europe and other countries.
- The majority of volunteers, 77%, were on placements for four weeks or less. This demonstrates both supply and demand for short-term overseas volunteering placements in 2013 which is similar to the data emerging in the 2012 survey.
- VSAs estimated that over 51% of their volunteers worked between 30 & 39 hours per week while 22% worked between 40 and 49 hours per week during their volunteer placements.
- Volunteers in 2013 were most active during their placements in the areas of: teaching/training; children/youth development; capacity building; medicine and healthcare and community development.
- Students were the largest cohort of volunteers (54%) categorised by their status, with employed people forming the second largest group (33%).
- The proportion of volunteers with prior experience of overseas volunteering was 43%, and those volunteering for the first time in 2013 were 57% of the cohort. This indicates an increase in new and first time volunteers in 2013. Just over 75% of volunteers had prior experience of volunteering domestically.
- The majority of volunteers (38%) had attained either lower post-primary level or equivalent (e.g. Irish Junior Certificate), with 29% having a Bachelor degree or equivalent (honours or non-honours level) level of education. However, many VSAs do not collect this information so the result must be interpreted with caution.

In conclusion, international volunteers travelling from Ireland in 2013 were mainly women, aged 30 or younger, Irish nationals, mostly students and going on volunteer placements of four weeks or less. This concentration of young volunteers and short-term volunteering placements suggests limited opportunities for skills transfer between volunteers and host communities and raises broader questions about the role of volunteer placements in achieving long-term development goals with such short time frames. It does point to the importance of comprehensive pre-departure training for volunteers in order for volunteers to rapidly acclimatise and commence their placement immediately upon arrival. It also indicates the critical importance of post-return opportunities and supports to allow volunteers to continue to engage with development issues and the VSA they went on placement with.

The high number of volunteers active in the areas of teaching, children and youth development, special needs advocacy and support, emerging in the results of question 18, indicates an onus on the sending VSAs to ensure child and vulnerable adult protection procedures, policies and training are in place for volunteers, host communities and VSA staff. This is also relevant to overseas volunteers who are aged less than 18 years. It should be noted that in the 2013 survey section “Profile of your overseas volunteers”, which consisted of questions 13 to 22, the response rates were somewhat lower than the previous section. This implies that in some cases definitive findings are not possible with the incomplete data available. Many of the VSAs also stated that they do not collect the data required to answer certain questions.

5. Issues Affecting Overseas Volunteering

This section of the survey asked for information regarding any perceived issues, from the perspective of the VSAs completing the questionnaire, that may affect international volunteering and volunteer recruitment in Ireland. In order to collect qualitative data through the online survey process a comments section in question 25 allowed for survey respondents to add any feedback, additional information or to highlight issues related to the research or their own work and programmes.

Question 23 required VSAs to explain the reasons behind any differences in the numbers of volunteers they wished to recruit and the number that they actually recruited in 2013. This question was based on a similar question in the 2012 survey but with three possible responses and the added aspect of an “other” section where respondents could describe what they perceive as barriers or impediments to volunteer recruitment. The low number of respondents to this question, 24, suggests that many VSAs were satisfied with the final number of volunteers they recruited in 2013. Of those who answered the question the largest response was in the category of “Financial cost of overseas volunteering” as a potential barrier to desired levels of volunteer recruitment as selected by 17 or 71% of the question respondents. Concerns about safety overseas and the risk of becoming ill were reported by considerably lower numbers of respondents (only four and one respectively) and in significantly lower numbers than in the 2012 survey.

Thirteen VSAs completed the “other” section of this question and gave their comments and feedback. These responses were then analysed and categorised into the following three main themes:

- Financial concerns from volunteers, including difficulty in fundraising;
- Difficulty in getting leave from work to volunteer or the length of time of a volunteer placement is perceived as being problematic as it is too long; and
- VSAs needing volunteers with a specific set of skills and not being able to find volunteers with these skills.

The responses indicate that the financial cost of volunteering is a significant barrier for volunteer recruitment from the perspective of Irish VSAs. This presents considerable challenges to the sector as the funds derived from volunteer fees or contributions are a key source of income for VSAs, as documented in the responses to question six and also considering the responses to question 12, where 73% of VSAs surveyed charge a fee or fundraising contribution. The financial implications of international volunteering for both the volunteer and the VSA imply that the cost of international volunteering is an issue for volunteers, but also a barrier to volunteer recruitment for VSAs.



The last question in the survey allowed space for additional comments from respondents on overseas volunteering from Ireland. Eleven VSAs used this opportunity to provide additional information in the form of remarks and to stress aspects of their volunteer programme or to expand on earlier question responses, but the majority of VSAs (38) skipped this question. The responses also raised the practical challenges and issues that VSAs are experiencing as well as highlighting changes to their volunteering programmes. Issues such as visa requirements to enter host countries; concerns about short-term unskilled volunteering placements; an increase in capacity in host countries with local staff and volunteers now doing the roles that Irish volunteers would once have filled; the importance of pre-departure and post-return supports and training for volunteers; reciprocal volunteering placements and engaging people with disabilities in volunteering programmes all emerged as part of the survey comments. The comments relating to reciprocal volunteering and programmes that are inclusive of and adapted to volunteers with disabilities are particularly welcome as they represent increased diversity in both the types of volunteers and the directionality of volunteering in Ireland. The increase in the capacity of host communities and as a result fewer Irish volunteers required noted by one VSA is also a welcome comment as this demonstrates skills exchanged between volunteers and the host communities and a commitment to local capacity building in the host country.

In conclusion, despite interest in and demand for international volunteering placements there are barriers and challenges emerging in the data for both the volunteer and the VSA. The most significant barrier noted is the financial cost of volunteering with time off or away from the labour market also noted as problematic. The challenge of taking a career break articulated in this research may also relate to the Irish public sector recruitment embargo in place since 2009. Resolving these two issues will be crucial for VSAs in order to attract potential new volunteers and to retain previous volunteers for future overseas placements.

6. Concluding Remarks and Opportunities for Future Research

Conducting this research with VSAs for two years running has enabled Comhlámh to collate key data relating to the international volunteering sector in Ireland and to identify a number of emerging trends. The survey has been updated and revised to take into account the recommendations identified in the 2012 report, as well as feedback from key stakeholders, including the CSO and VSAs themselves. This has enabled a focus on the profile of both the VSAs and the volunteers they are recruiting in Ireland.

Amongst the key trends emerging when the data is compared between the two years is the continued vibrancy of the sector, as evidenced by the number of VSAs that are operating from Ireland and the large volume of applications for overseas placements that they received. Strong ongoing support from the public for international volunteering is also apparent, manifesting itself financially through donations and fundraising events, as well as by the fact that just over 25% of VSAs are operated on a voluntary basis. This is particularly notable at a time when overall support for charities is decreasing and their role is coming under increasing scrutiny from members of the public.

In terms of types of placements, the most common volunteering opportunities being offered by VSAs in 2013 were youth placements, which was also one of the main types offered in 2012. This suggests an ongoing interest in volunteering that is continuing to renew itself on an annual basis. Data comparisons between 2012 and 2013 indicate that the number of VSAs offering corporate/private sector and diaspora volunteering opportunities is increasing, while online volunteering is a small but growing part of overall placements. The main activities that formed the focus of volunteer placements in 2012 and 2013 were children/youth development, capacity building, community development, and building and construction. In 2013, other most frequent volunteer activities were teaching/training; medicine/healthcare; and disability/special needs. This marked a change from the prevalence of agriculture/food security and business, finance and enterprise that were common in 2012. The shifting emphasis of activities may be taken to indicate programmes that are responsive to the needs of host communities; it may also reflect changes in the composition of VSAs during the year, and the availability or lack of availability of volunteers with particular skills and qualifications.

The findings demonstrate that the overall number of VSAs has remained high in recent years, despite the challenging external environment. However, Comhlámh's internal records of CoGP



signatories show that a significant number of organisations ceased sending volunteers in both 2012 and 2013. In all, ten VSAs stopped sending volunteers in 2013. Of these: two focused on long-term placements of more than a year; two on placements lasting two to three months; four on placements of up to four weeks; and two on placements ranging from a few weeks to a year or longer. This illustrates that some organisations are finding it challenging to remain operational, but are being replaced by others that offer overseas placements, demonstrating a strong, ongoing supply-side demand. In terms of implications for Comhlámh's work, it shows that there is a relatively high turnover and replacement of VSAs, with work being needed to support newly established agencies in implementing the Comhlámh CoGP. More broadly, the question of impact on the host communities of VSAs ceasing their placements and operations needs to be examined.

Comparisons between the data for both years indicate a number of changes in the profile of those volunteering from Ireland. The number of female volunteers increased from 50% to 66% between the two years, while the number of volunteers with Irish nationality grew from 85% in 2012 to 90% in 2013. There was a drop in the number of those with prior experience of overseas volunteering, from 52% in 2012 to 43% in 2013, suggesting an increase in new and first time volunteers and supporting the idea that volunteering is continuing to be of interest to a wide group of people.

Perhaps the most significant finding in terms of demographics is that the number of volunteers aged 30 and under continues to grow, from 50% in 2012 to 71% in 2013. The biggest single group within this were volunteers aged between 18 and 25 years (46% of the total). In 2013, the largest cohort by employment status was comprised of students (54%), followed by employed people (34%): again, this is a significant change from 2012, when the figures were 40% and 44% respectively. Additionally, the proportion of volunteers undertaking short-term placements of four weeks or less increased year on year, from 70% in 2012 to 77% in 2013.

Taken together, these findings give rise to a number of questions about the nature and role of overseas volunteering from Ireland. Recent research (for example Allum 2012, UNV 2011) has suggested a surge in shorter-term international youth volunteering, which raises questions about the resultant shift from longer-term placements with an emphasis on professional skills and experience. Large scale, state-sponsored youth volunteering initiatives have in recent years been introduced in countries including Germany (weltwärts) and the UK (International Citizen Service). These frequently have a stated focus on global learning and on the contribution that volunteers make to raising awareness of development issues on their return home. The issue of supply-side demand for these placements has been raised in a number of evaluations, while their longer term impact on host communities and contribution to mainstream development outcomes is still being evaluated in many cases.

A large majority of survey respondents stated that their organisation is a signatory to Comhlámh's CoGP, which outlines a number of principles guiding all aspects of a volunteer placement and emphasising the need for equal partnership between the sending agency, the host community and the individual volunteer. The CoGP is revised every two years, in consultation with signatories, and the findings from the research indicate that particular consideration needs to be given in future revisions to ensuring that the principles are cognisant of the shift towards shorter term youth volunteering. One recommendation from Comhlámh's research on the role of returned volunteers as development education multipliers (2014) was that further efforts need to be made to integrate development education into the CoGP. Doing so in consultation with VSAs and returned volunteers would help to ensure that no matter what the length of time of a placement, the idea of ongoing engagement would be mainstreamed from the outset.

Additionally, the survey findings highlight the need to focus on the return stage of the volunteer cycle: previous research (such as Comhlámh 2013, Allum 2012, Tiessen 2012) indicates that this stage of the volunteer experience is often assigned insufficient resources and attention, despite the fact that returnees can be a significant resource for change making. Conditions identified that nurture and support ongoing engagement include recognition, access to support services, offering a range of options to get involved, providing a space to debate issues, and assistance with finding a suitable opportunity. The evolving nature of volunteering suggests that it is very important for Comhlámh to continue to work on these issues, whether directly with volunteers or in partnership with VSAs, including through the CoGP. Without a focus on engagement and action post-return, there is a danger that the huge potential for overseas placements to support global learning may not be maximised.

Opportunities for Future Research

Building on the process and findings of the 2012 and 2013 surveys with VSAs and the subsequent data emerging it will be important for Comhlámh to continue this research on an annual basis to collate longitudinal data and analyse emerging trends in relation to international volunteering and Ireland. This annual quantitative research will also bring insights to the Volunteer Support and Good Practice aspect of the Irish Aid Volunteering Initiative. Updating and expanding the survey sample will be an imperative part of any future research to ensure that the sample includes all relevant VSAs across Ireland, including newly established VSAs. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many overseas volunteers from Ireland choose to volunteer with VSAs that are not registered in Ireland or Northern Ireland but which recruit and send volunteers from Ireland overseas. Incorporating the figures from these VSAs will probably increase the numbers of international volunteers from Ireland but remains beyond the current configured inclusion criteria for the study sample. Including new questions and topics to investigate should also be a feature of future annual Comhlámh surveys. The addition of a focus on development education as part of the overseas volunteering process, potentially before, during and after the volunteer placement, within the survey questionnaire is strongly recommended for the next Comhlámh VSA survey.

This report presents data and findings from the perspective of the VSAs, future Comhlámh research could focus on the experiences, observations and insights from the perspective of returned volunteers. This would be possibly better suited to qualitative research methods such as interviews and focus groups and would complement the data emerging from the surveys with VSAs. This qualitative research could include topics such as enhanced skills, motivations for volunteering and the longer term impact of international volunteering on study and/or employment: all from the perspective of the volunteer. The increase in corporate volunteering programmes and the impact of volunteering on the employee from an employer's perspective should also be explored in future Comhlámh research.

Finally the impact of international volunteers from Ireland on host communities, organisations and projects needs to be assessed and researched. Although perhaps challenging in terms of resources for Comhlámh this type of research could be undertaken in collaboration with Irish VSAs and would allow for a more robust and complete picture of the impact of international volunteering from Ireland.

Bibliography and References

Allum, Cliff (2012). Youth International Volunteering and Development: an opportunity for development, international understanding or social inclusion? International Forum on Development Service.

Cannon, B., King, D., Sleeman, S. (2007). Working for a Better World: A Guide to Volunteering in Global Development. Comhlámh.

Central Statistics Office. Census Form 2006 and 2011. CSO.

Comhlámh (2013). Back to the Future: Returned Volunteers as Multipliers for Development Education in Ireland. Comhlámh.

Comhlámh (2013). Comhlámh's Code of Good Practice for Volunteer Sending Organisations. Comhlámh.

Comhlámh's Volunteering Options (2009). Research into Barriers to Continuous Engagement as Experienced by Returned Volunteers and Returned Development Workers. Comhlámh.

GHK (2010). Volunteering in the European Union. Directorate General Education and Culture.

Irish Aid (2013). Reducing Hunger, Strengthening Resilience: Irish Aid Annual Report 2012. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Irish Aid (2013). The Irish Aid Volunteering Initiative. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Irish Aid (2010). Irish Aid Draft Volunteer Survey. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Irish Nonprofits Knowledge Exchange (2012). Irish Nonprofits: What do we know? Irish Nonprofits Knowledge Exchange.

McCloughan, Pat (2013). New Evidence on Overseas Volunteering from Ireland and its Socio-Economic Impact in Ireland. Comhlámh.

Suas Educational Development (2013). National Survey of Third Level Students on Global Development. Suas.

Tiessen, Rebecca (2012). Creating Global Citizens? The Impact of Learning/Volunteer Abroad Programs. International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

United Nations Volunteers (2011). State of the World's Volunteerism Report. UNV.

VOESA (2013). Models of International Volunteering. Comhlámh.

Volunteering Ireland website www.volunteer.ie

Appendices

Appendix I

Comhlámh Code of Good Practice and self-audit Tool

The Comhlámh Code of Good Practice (CoGP) for Volunteer Sending Agencies is a set of standards for organisations involved in facilitating international volunteer placements in countries most of which are developing countries. The focus is to ensure overseas volunteering has a positive impact for the three main stakeholders: the volunteer, the sending agency, and the local project and community. Additionally, it reflects a number of core values. These are: partnership, quality, security, encouraging appropriate volunteer attitudes, valuing volunteering, sustainability, development education, solidarity and the importance of contributing to development. Signatory organisations are required to submit a completed self-audit on an annual basis using the CoGP self-audit tool. All volunteer sending agencies are required to undertake an external audit shortly after becoming a signatory to the Code of Good Practice.

The CoGP can be used as a tool by any organisation or group sending volunteers overseas in a development context, whether small or large, for-profit or not-for-profit, faith-based or secular. The CoGP principles and indicators have been designed to accommodate a broad range of programme types including organisations targeting volunteers participating in short-term and long-term non-professional placements and highly -skilled placements. Signing up to the CoGP and participating in the formal monitoring and validation processes is only open to organisations that:

- Have an international volunteer programme in place;
- Are legally registered as either a company or charity in Ireland or Northern Ireland for over a year;
- Have had a volunteer programme operating for a minimum of a year;
- Include a development impact / awareness focus to its programme;
- Commit to working towards the principles outlined in the CoGP;
- Complete and submit the self-audit tool to Comhlámh annually;
- Attend at least one of two peer support meetings annually in the spirit of shared learning;
- Complete and submit the CoGP self-audit prior to being reviewed for consideration as full CoGP signatory member;
- Complete and submit a Code of Good Practice self-audit prior to being reviewed for consideration as full CoGP signatory member;
- Actively work towards implementing the minimum standards outlined within the self-audit;
- Participate in an external audit in the first year of becoming a signatory and participate in other auditing processes periodically thereafter;
- Inform all persons within the organisation—including new members of staff—of its status as a signatory and ensure that all individuals understand and support the decision to be a signatory to the CoGP;
- Inform all members of staff about the responsibilities and obligations of being a signatory to the CoGP.

Appendix II

Survey Questionnaire

2014 Comhlámh Volunteer Sending Agencies Survey

Survey introduction

Comhlámh are carrying out an annual survey of volunteer sending agencies building on previous research commissioned in 2012. The purpose of this survey is to collect comparable data each year on overseas volunteering to build a sound evidence base about trends in overseas volunteering from Ireland.

Please participate in this survey if your organisation is legally registered as a charity or company in Ireland or Northern Ireland and has sent volunteers overseas from Ireland in 2013.

All responses will be treated in strictest confidence and only anonymised and aggregated survey results will be presented at the conclusion of the research process. There will be no data or information attributable to individuals or to individual volunteer sending agencies produced or presented arising from this research.

This year the survey is faster to complete than last year and many of the questions have a 'Don't Know' section to use if you do not collect the relevant information requested in your organisation. We recommend that you read through the whole survey before you begin to answer it and estimate that it should take you about 10 minutes to complete it.

Comhlámh will publish a report based on the data from this survey later this year and we hope that volunteer sending agencies will find the outcomes of the research to be of interest and of use in their own work.

If you wish to print a copy of your completed survey questions and responses for your records please click on the File option from your browser's menu header. Click Print Preview. This shows a preview of exactly what will print from that page. Click the Print button before you go to the next survey page.

Please complete the survey by Friday 18th April 2014.

Thank you.

About your organisation and volunteering programme

1. When was your organisation founded (if you are part of an international organisation, please indicate year first established in Ireland)?

2. Type of organisation (please tick one box only)?

- Not for profit
- For profit
- Other (please specify)

3. What type of volunteering placements are offered by your organisation?

- Group-based volunteering placements
- Individual volunteering placements
- Both

Other (please specify)

2014 Comhlámh Volunteer Sending Agencies Survey

4. Does your overseas volunteering programme include any of the following? Please tick all that apply.

- Corporate/private sector volunteering
- Diaspora Volunteering
- Youth Volunteering (aged under 30)
- Exchange/Reciprocal Volunteering
- South-North Volunteering
- South-South Volunteering
- Online Volunteering

Other (please specify)

5. Total number of paid staff in your organisation at the end of 2013 (based in your Irish office and not international field staff).

Full-time

Part-time

6. How is your organisation funded? Please tick all that apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irish Aid | <input type="checkbox"/> Donations from the public |
| <input type="checkbox"/> European Union/Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> Donations from businesses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other government/official funding | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-governmental organisation (NGO) funding | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer contribution/placement fees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropic/foundation funding | |

Other (please specify)

7. Number of applications to your organisation in 2013 for overseas volunteering placements?

Number of applicants

8. Number of overseas volunteers your organisation aimed or wanted to recruit in 2013?

Number wanted

9. Is your organisation a signatory to Comhlámh's Code of Good Practice?

- Yes No Don't know

2014 Comhlámh Volunteer Sending Agencies Survey

10. What countries did your organisation send volunteers to in 2013? Please list all the countries.

11. Have you noticed an increase in interest in overseas volunteering with your organisation in 2013 compared with 2012 (estimated by number of applications, enquiries etc.)? Please tick one box only.

- Significant increase in interest
- Increase in interest
- No change in interest
- Decline in interest
- Significant decline in interest
- Don't know

If you have seen a significant decline or significant increase can you explain why you think this has happened?

12. Do you have a fee or minimum contribution or fundraising requirement for your volunteers?

- No (no fee/contribution/fundraising required)
- Yes (please complete 12(a) below)

12(a) What is the average fee/contribution/fundraising requirement per volunteer sent overseas by your organisation in 2013 (in Euros)?

Profile of your overseas volunteers

The following questions relate to data and information on the volunteers that your organisation sent overseas from Ireland in 2013.

13. Number of volunteers sent abroad by your organisation in 2013 by sex?

a) Female

b) Male

Total (a+b)

2014 Comhlámh Volunteer Sending Agencies Survey

14. Number of volunteers sent abroad by your organisation in 2013 by their age category?

Aged 17 years and under	<input type="text"/>
Aged 18-25 years	<input type="text"/>
Aged 26-30 years	<input type="text"/>
Aged 31-40 years	<input type="text"/>
Aged 41-50 years	<input type="text"/>
Aged 51-65 years	<input type="text"/>
Aged 66+ years	<input type="text"/>
Don't collect this information (please enter 0)	<input type="text"/>

15. Number of volunteers sent abroad by your organisation in 2013 by nationality?

Irish	<input type="text"/>
UK	<input type="text"/>
Other EU (please specify)	<input type="text"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>

16. Number of volunteers sent abroad by your organisation in 2013 by duration of their placement?

Number of volunteers overseas for under 2 weeks	<input type="text"/>
Number of volunteers overseas for 2 to 4 weeks	<input type="text"/>
Number of volunteers overseas for 1 to 2 months	<input type="text"/>
Number of volunteers overseas for 2 to 3 months	<input type="text"/>
Number of volunteers overseas for 4 to 6 months	<input type="text"/>
Number of volunteers overseas for 7 to 11 months	<input type="text"/>
Number of volunteers overseas for 12 to 24 months	<input type="text"/>
Number of volunteers overseas for 24+ months	<input type="text"/>

2014 Comhlámh Volunteer Sending Agencies Survey

17. Estimate the average hours per week spent on voluntary activities per volunteer in 2013 while overseas. Please tick one box only.

- 0-9 hours per week
 40-49 hours per week
 10-19 hours per week
 50+ hours per week
 20-29 hours per week
 Don't know
 30-39 hours per week

18. Indicate the main roles and activities that volunteers with your organisation participated in during 2013 while overseas. Please tick all that apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture/food security | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender/women |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, culture and media | <input type="checkbox"/> Information and communications technology (ICT) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building and construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Law and human rights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business, finance and enterprise | <input type="checkbox"/> Medicine and healthcare |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Campaigning/advocacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Peace-keeping/building |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Capacity building | <input type="checkbox"/> Policy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children/youth development | <input type="checkbox"/> Project management/administration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community development | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation and environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability/special needs advocacy/support | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching/training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe) | |

19. Number of volunteers sent abroad by your organisation in 2013 by their status at the time of their departure?

Employed	<input type="text"/>
Self-employed	<input type="text"/>
Unemployed	<input type="text"/>
Student	<input type="text"/>
Retired	<input type="text"/>
Member of a religious order (Clergy, Nun, Pastor etc)	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>
Don't collect this information (please enter 0)	<input type="text"/>

Final questions on overseas volunteering

2014 Comhlámh Volunteer Sending Agencies Survey

20. Number of volunteers sent overseas by your organisation in 2013 with prior experience of overseas volunteering (with your organisation or any other volunteering organisation)?

Prior experience of volunteering overseas

No prior experience of volunteering overseas

Don't know (please enter 0)

21. Number of volunteers sent overseas by your organisation in 2013 with prior experience of home volunteering (with your organisation or any other volunteering organisation)?

Prior experience of volunteering in Ireland or volunteer's home country

No prior experience of volunteering in Ireland or volunteer's home country

Don't know (please enter 0)

22. Number of volunteers sent abroad by your organisation in 2013 by highest level of educational attainment/qualification?

Primary level

Lower post-primary level or equivalent (e.g. Irish Junior Certificate)

Upper post-primary level or equivalent (e.g. Irish Leaving Certificate)

Bachelor degree or equivalent (honours or non-honours level)

Masters degree or equivalent

PhD/doctoral degree or equivalent

Professional/technical qualification accredited by a body (e.g. accounting, law, health)

Don't collect this information (please enter 0)

2014 Comhlámh Volunteer Sending Agencies Survey

23. If there is a difference between the number of volunteers you wanted to recruit (Question 8) and the number of volunteers actually recruited (total Question 13) please outline what you think are the reasons for this?

- Concerns about safety overseas
- Financial cost of overseas volunteering
- Concern about the risk of becoming ill
- Other reasons (please describe)

24. Name of your organisation (optional)

25. If you have any additional comments to make on overseas volunteering from Ireland, please use the space below.

***26. Please include a phone number or email in case any clarification on your responses is needed**

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. The responses you gave will be very helpful in building a sound evidence base about trends in overseas volunteering from Ireland. We will notify you about the research results and our plans to publish this information later in 2014 through our website and e-newsletters.

If you have any queries please contact Siobán O'Brien Green, Research and Policy Officer in Comhlámh at 01 478 3490 or sioban@comhlamh.org

Thank you.

Appendix III

Information on Invitation to participate in Comhlámh Research

Comhlámh are carrying out an annual survey of volunteer sending agencies building on previous research commissioned in 2012. The purpose of this survey is to collect comparable data each year on overseas volunteering to build a sound evidence base about trends in overseas volunteering from Ireland. You can read the research report based on our previous survey “New Evidence on Overseas volunteering from Ireland” launched in 2013 on our website.

All survey responses will be treated in strictest confidence and only anonymised and aggregated survey results will be presented at the conclusion of the research process. There will be no data or information attributable to individuals or to individual volunteer sending agencies produced or presented arising from this research. We estimate it will take approximately ten minutes to complete the survey.

Please participate in this survey if your organisation is legally registered as a charity or company in Ireland or Northern Ireland and has sent volunteers overseas from Ireland in 2013.

Click on the following link to participate in the survey

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Comhlamh_VSA_Survey2014

We look forward to your assistance and co-operation in participating with this important research and hope it will provide year on year comparable data which is timely, useful and robust for the Irish overseas volunteering sector. Your time and input to this research is very much appreciated, and we look forward to sharing the findings of the research with you in the coming months.

Please complete the survey by Friday 2nd May 2014.

Kind regards and many thanks for your cooperation with this survey,

Siobán O'Brien Green
Research and Policy Officer



Appendix IV

Breakdown of Question Response Rates in the 2013 Comhlámh VSA Survey (note question 26 required an answer and therefore has not been included in the response rates calculation)

Question number	Question topic	Number of Respondents	Number of Non-respondents	Response Rate %
1	Year VSA founded	49	0	100%
2	Type of organisation	49	0	100%
3	Types of volunteering placements offered	48	1	98%
4	Types of volunteering programmes offered	45	4	92%
5	Total number of paid staff in VSA	46	3	94%
6	Organisational funding sources	47	2	96%
7	Number of applicants to VSA in 2013	47	2	96%
8	Number of volunteers wanted by VSA in 2013	46	3	94%
9	VSA signatory to Comhlámh CoGP	48	1	98%
10	Recipient countries of VSA volunteers in 2013	47	2	96%
11	Change in interest in volunteering in 2013	47	2	96%
12	Fee or contribution charged from volunteers	48	1	98%
12(a)	Average fee per volunteer (N.B. 27% of VSAs do not have a fee)	33	2	67%
13	Number of volunteers in 2013 by sex	38	11	76%
14	Number of volunteers in 2013 by age category	36	13	73%
15	Number of volunteers in 2013 by nationality	35	14	71%
16	Number of volunteers by duration of placement	36	13	73%
17	Average hours per week volunteering per volunteer	37	12	75%
18	Main roles & activities of volunteers participated in	38	11	76%
19	Volunteers' status at time of departure	36	13	73%
20	Number of volunteers in 2013 with prior experience of volunteering overseas	34	15	69%
21	Number of volunteers in 2013 with prior experience of volunteering in Ireland or home country	35	14	71%
22	Number of volunteers by highest level of educational attainment	36	13	73%
23	Issues affecting overseas volunteer recruitment in Ireland in 2013	24	25	49%
24	Name of organisation (<i>optional</i>)	33	16	67%
25	Additional comments (<i>not included in 2012 survey</i>)	11	38	22%

Appendix V

Further breakdown of data from responses to question 10: What countries did your organisations send volunteers to in 2013? Please list all the countries.

Table of the DAC List of official development assistance (ODA) Recipients January 2012 (Source OECD) and countries volunteers from Ireland were placed in 2013

Least Developed Countries	Other Low-Income Countries	Lower-Middle Income Countries and Territories	Upper Middle Income Countries and Territories
Cambodia	Kenya	Ghana	Argentina
DRC	South Sudan	Guatemala	Belarus
Ethiopia	Tajikistan	Honduras	Botswana
Gambia		India	Brazil
Haiti		Indonesia	Ecuador
Laos		Moldova	Mexico
Lesotho		Morocco	Panama
Liberia		Nicaragua	Peru
Malawi		Papua New Guinea	South Africa
Mozambique		Paraguay	Thailand
Nepal		Philippines	
Rwanda		Sri Lanka	
Senegal		Swaziland	
Sierra Leone		Vietnam	
Tanzania			
Uganda			
Zambia			

Note: Palestine, Romania and the Grenadines are not included on the DAC List but they received volunteers from Ireland in 2013.

© Comhlámh 2014



Comhlámh
12 Parliament Street
Dublin 2
Ireland

E: info@comhlamh.org
T: 01 478 3490
www.comhlamh.org



follow the hashtag: #VolOps

