Young Women in Civilian Service
a pilot project



by
Guendalina dell'Anno, Debora Radicchia, Maura Viezzoli

CISP
COMITATO INTERNAZIONALE PER LO SVILUPPO DEI POPOLI

Education and Culture
Youth

MINISTERO DEL WELFARE
Dipartimento delle politiche sociali e previdenziali

"YOUNG WOMEN IN CIVILIAN SERVICE"
A pilot project

By
Maura Viezzoli, Debora Radicchia, Guendalina Dell'Anno

Collaboration with:
Bologna Municipality, Cori Municipality, Mantua Municipality, Padua Municipality, Reggio Emilia Municipality, Rome Municipality, Turin Municipality, Massa Carrara Province, Parma Province, Emilia Romagna Region, Tuscany Region

and with:
Association Lunaria

CISP - International Commitee for the Development of People
Germanico 198, 00192 Rome (Italy)
Tel. +39 06 3215498
Fax +39 06 3216163
E-mail: cisp@cisp-ngo.org

National Agency for Youth
Ministry of Welfare
Fornovo 8 - Pal. A, 00192 Rome (Italy)
Tel. +39 06 36754439
Fax + 39 06 3675435
E-mail: info@gioventu.it

Translation: Linguadue
Viale di Porta Sant'Angelo 27, 05100 Terni (Italy)
Tel. 0744 59804
Fax 0744 409537
E-mail: linguad@tin.it

Copyright: Cisp 2002

Tipography: Palombi Editori
Germanico 107, 00192 Rome (Italy)

Index

Introduction 5

PART I -"YOUNG WOMEN IN CIVILIAN SERVICE": A PILOT PROJECT 7

I.1 The project development context 7

I.2 Project presentation 8
Partner countries 12
Local authorities 12
The tender 12
Areas of Intervention 13

I.3 Test goals and expected results 13

PART II – INITIATIVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION 14

II .1 Introduction 14
Work method - Participatory evaluation 15

II.2 Project participation 17

II.3 Local partnership, involved subjects and their roles 17

II.4 The selection criteria of the female volunteers 19

II.5 Content and quality of the training programme 20
Factors of criticality and success of the training course proposed to the young volunteers 22

II.6 The civilian service of the young female volunteers 24
Factors of criticality and success of the service carried out in Italy 24

II.7 The young volunteers and the experience of the European Voluntary Service (EVS) 25
Factors of criticality and success of the service carried out abroad 27

II.8 Pilot project development incentives 28
Other incentives 29

II.9 Other general problematic elements emerged from the project experimentation 30

II.10 Results of local study cases 31

PART III. QUALI-QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS: THE LEVEL OF SATISFACTION OF THE YOUNG VOLUNTEERS, THE EXPECTED AND ACHIEVED FRAMEWORK 61

III. 1 A closer look at the young volunteers 61

III. 2 Analysis of the satisfaction level of the volunteers about the selection procedures, received training and initiative objectives 64
The selection phase 64
The project objectives 65
The training programme 66
The voluntary work service carried out in Italy 67
The voluntary work service abroad – the EVS experience 69

PART IV – ASSESSMENT ELEMENTS AND FINAL CONSIDERATIONS 73

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES 81

BIBLIOGRAPHY 82

CIVILIAN SERVICE WEB SITES 84

Introduction

The pilot-project "Young women in civilian service" was born in the summer of '98 and started as an experiment in a period when regulations were changing, characterized by the defence model reform and by the redefinition of the civilian service (as provided by the new law 230 of '98). Meanwhile, (in March 2001), law 64 was passed concerning voluntary civilian service, open to both males and females. So the experimentation took place in a delicate period. In spite of this, we can say that it was a positive experience.

The female voluntary civilian service involved about one hundred young people between the ages of 18 to 27. Nine local administrations took part (Bologna, Turin, Rome, Padova, Cori, Massa Carrara, Mantova, Parma, Reggio Emilia), selecting 124 young women and placing them in projects of social use. The ten month period of civilian service was completed by 97 young volunteers; most of them having done nine months service in Italy and three abroad (in welcome centres in France, Spain and the United Kingdom). The young women were employed in projects related to the assistance of the disabled, the elderly, immigrants, women, children and young people, minors at risk, and in initiatives concerning urban quality and safety and the preservation of the artistic and cultural heritage. A good judgement of this experience was given by the young women themselves.

The bulky project report – by the Cisp, International Committee for the Development of People – states that the female voluntary civilian service was revealed as being a happy partnership experience between the Department for Social Affairs of the Ministry of Labour, the Regions, Provinces and Municipalities, enthusiastically involving different bodies and institutions. This experience – the Cisp researchers tell us – requires a series of adjustments aimed towards a better use of resources and a more efficient coordination among the different subjects interested. We shall see together which corrections to introduce. I would like to mention one of the proposals hoping that the female voluntary civilian service be recognized in the form of training credit.

The Government has recently presented the first true informative campaign concerning the national civilian service closely linked to the pilot-project analysed in this report. A civilian service no longer privileging only males (until now carried out by conscientious objection), but also possible for young women unfit for military service.

The recent law number 64 has introduced new typologies of civilian service, especially regarding voluntary service. Those applying for entrance to this service, by means of public recruiting announcements, shall be employed in Italy and abroad in the field of assistance and civil protection, in the environmental sector, assisting aids sufferers and drug addicts. With hundreds of projects that have already been presented by the bodies, the young women and men can choose those they feel more suited to.

The national civilian service will also represent the right answer to the problem raised by the cancellation of the compulsory military service that will be fully accomplished by the year 2006. The national civilian service is a challenge, of course, since in the past there was a certain flow (60/70 thousand), while now we must rely only on voluntary service and therefore those who choose the civilian service must be offered credible projects. Potentially - according to a recent survey – 42% of young people are ready to do the civilian service. It is up to us, and above all to the different subjects, to provide "attractive" propositions and effective answers to the common need of solidarity. The pilot-experience – shown in this report – can give us extremely useful indications.

Sen.Grazia Sestini
Under-Secretary of State
Ministry of Welfare

PART I -"Young women in Civilian Service": a pilot project

I.1 The project development context

The present report closes an important trial period for the female voluntary civilian service. The experiment, carried out between 1998 and 2001, started when our country was in a transition phase on two sides: the reform of the defence model and the reshaping of the civilian service structure.On June 16th, 1998 the Senate of the Republic approved the new law on conscientious objection to military service, law 230, 1998. The normative acknowledged the citizens right to object and to carry out an alternative civilian duty in a new way, in Italy or abroad in humanitarian missions.The law laid anew the fundaments of the civilian service in Italy, acknowledging its fundamental role in youth formation. In fact, the civilian service in Italy had been wanting in strategic organization since 1972, year of the approval of the first law on conscientious objection.

Almost at the same time, the debate was ripening on a law proposal concerning civilian service to go along with the normative on compulsory military service and conscientious objection. This new law, to be developed basically within the draft context, would have given young women access to the civilian service on a voluntary basis.The debate underlined a substantial under-evaluation of the necessary changes for the enhancement of this opportunity for young women, that was feared, would have led in the actuation of the law, also to an objective under-evaluation of the measures required to favour access of women to the voluntary civilian service. In this phase, it seemed particularly important to support the access of women with measures to facilitate their participation.

The pilot project "Young women in the civilian service" was developed between June and July 1998, aimed at collecting useful elements for the promotion of this opportunity, making it possible for a group of young female volunteers to experience the civilian service together with conscientious objectors. The goal was to identify the conditions young women could take part in the voluntary civilian service instead of pursuing different life projects. This pilot experience provided useful indications to be used on a national level.Afterwards the situation in our country evolved according to a different directive. In September 1999, the Parliament reached the consent required for the reform of the military service and the mandatory military system model was abandoned in favour of the voluntary military service.

The Parliament decision generated not few polemics relative to different factors, among them the speed with which the reform had been passed not allowing enough time, according to some people, to reflect on social and general organizational changes that resulted from the reform. Another issue were the difficulties to be faced by those public and private services whose efficiency depended on the presence of the conscientious objectors.After a few months, at the beginning of 2001, the new law on voluntary civilian service, was passed (L.64, March 6th, 2001), and its fundamental feature

is the presence of young men and women committing themselves to one year of civilian service.The project "Young women in civilian service", elaborated in a different political-legislative prospective acquired a wider valence being the only national wide pilot project aimed at verifying the access condition of young people, women in particular, to voluntary civilian service.With the new law on voluntary civilian service and the introduction of the "volunteering" principle, it was difficult to foresee the impact on young people of the ongoing legislative change, and the young men and women's response, in quantitative and qualitative terms, to the offer of voluntary civilian service.

The programme *"Young women in civilian service"*, tried to collect useful elements for the development of the two issues mentioned above: testing the inclusion of a group of young women in social programs as volunteers in civilian service; investigating the motives of their voluntary commitment to the programme and on the conditions of its success.

I.2 Project presentation

The programme "Young women in civilian Service" has been proposed and coordinated by the Department for Social Affairs (DSA), III Office – Voluntary Service, in partnership with Regions and local authorities: Emilia Romagna Region, Tuscany Region, Rome municipality, Padua municipality, Turin municipality, Bologna municipality. When the work was already in progress, Massa Carrara Province, Cori municipality,



The European Voluntary Service

The European Voluntary Service[1] (EVS) is a European programme promoted by the European Commission – Education and Culture General Directorate and actuated also through the decentralization of the National Agencies activities.

The community programme enables young Europeans to volunteer for an association or a local authority of another European Union country, Norway or Iceland for a period three to twelve months, offering a valid informal educative experience that can certainly be an efficient study model for a credible European civilian service.

The European Union through the EVS wanted to offer an intercultural learning experience to young people, to promote their social integration and active participation, to favour their employment and to allow them to express their solidarity towards others.

A European Voluntary Service project is a three-sided partnership: a volunteer, a sending organization and a host one.

A young volunteer, for EVS is a young person, between 18 and 25 years of age, citizen of one of the European Union member states, of Iceland or Norway or legally residing on their territory.

The volunteer takes part in a non-profit, unpaid activity, relevant to the community of the host association. The volun-

Parma Province, Mantua and Reggio Emilia municipalities joined in.The Ministry for equal opportunities and the National Office for civilian service took part in the initial planning. On the European side, the DSA, to take advantage of the strategic reference and financial frame of the European Volunteer Service, presented the European Union with a project called "EVS and National Civilian Service Initiatives", meant to network the Italian case results and to analyse the relationship between the European volunteer service and the different national contexts of civilian service. For this European project the DSA and the local authorities were in partnership with France, United Kingdom, Spain and Germany.The idea was to allow the involved countries to exchange experiences on national civilian service starting with the pilot project and aiming to set the base for a homogeneous normative within the European frame.The programme "Young women in civilian service" was carried out in Italy and in other European countries. In its final configuration it was a ten months long voluntary civilian service to be completed by a group of young women that could choose to spend part of this period abroad, working on social projects singled out by local authorities and foreign partners. The service time included also training and the learning of a foreign language.

In Italy the DSA valorised the projects and put them into the network, that had been already identified by the Local Authorities for the introduction of young women into the civilian service. There were social, cultural and environmental initiatives often in partnerships with the associations.

The pilot project involved a group of 97 female volunteers, between 18 and 27 years of age. Its general structure gave the young women the possibility to spend seven months of service in Italy and three abroad.

teer does not have any costs; the programme pays for travelling expenses, food and lodging, insurance and language training.

Forwarding organization means, on the other hand, any kind of non-governmental non-profit organization, local authority, association or local initiative willing to prepare and send one or more young persons and to start a partnership with another country host association, that allows volunteers to be party of non-profit social cultural and environmental activities.

The host organization proposes to host in its own structure one or more volunteers involving them in actions of various nature for the local development such as the assistance of the young, the elders and the disabled, children's activities, refugee reception, environmental protection, restoration of declining areas, cultural activities and activities against discrimination.

The European voluntary service programme promotes mostly transnational volunteering opportunities for young people within the "partner" countries, meaning Member states, Norway and Iceland, however some of the projects may involve also Third Countries.

The European Commission, Education and Culture General Directorate, is ultimately responsible for the implementation of a EVS project, but the carrying out of the actual programme is decentralized among the member states and

[1] From "Guide to European Voluntary service" - European Commission

managed in each country by a national structure interfacing the Commission, the national, regional and local project promoters and the volunteers themselves.
The national structures are in charge of the diffusion of the EVS general information; they encourage the constitution of hosting and sending organizations, give out information and directions, monitor projects and volunteers' activities and support volunteers and project managers in difficulty.



The European voluntary Service in the new community Youth Programme

The new trends of the European Union Youth politics for the period January 1 2000-December 31, 2006 are outlined in the " European Parliament and Council Decision Proposal " drafting the community action plan for Young people "Youth".
The new "Youth" programme unified in one action plan the programs "Youth for Europe" and "European voluntary service", in order to strengthen the integration and connection of the community policies dealing with young people with other community programs. The Youth programme answers to the need of completing the community framework of initiatives for young people offering them the opportunity of educational experience in an informal environment.

The YOUTH programme promotes the mobility, the spirit of initiative, the intercultural learning, the solidarity among young people in Europe and in the world, particularly encouraging the involvement of those young people disadvantaged on a cultural, geographical and social-economical level and of the disabled ones. In particular it proposes to:

- *Help young people to acquire knowledge, abilities and competences and to recognize the value of these experiences;*
- *Favour the integration of young people into society and to encourage the spirit of initiative;*
- *Allow the young people to express their solidarity freely in Europe and in the world and to support the battle against racism and xenophobia;*
- *Warrant an active role for the young people in the construction of Europe;*
- *Introduce a European dimension into the projects, with positive reflexes upon the youth activities at a local level;*
- *Promotion of a better understanding of the differences inherent to our common European cultural patrimony;*
- *Institute and develop a reference quality framework for educational activities outside the official structures, within the YOUTH programme.*

Its main actions are five:

Action 1 – Youth exchanges in EuropeThe action aims at promoting initiatives for the exchange of groups of young people with different backgrounds and coming from two or more EU Countries. The goal is to encourage projects stimulating a higher awareness of other cultures and to consider such topics as history, information and identities perceptions in a new perspective. It is meant to favour the meeting of young people, between 15 and 25 years old, to learn one from the other and to discover analogies and differences among the various cultures.

Action 2 – European Voluntary Service The goal of the European Voluntary Service action is based upon three fundamental principles:

- Offer young people an intercultural learning experience in informal contexts, to promote their social integration and active participation, to prepare them for employment, and to allow them to express their solidarity for other people;
- Support the development of local communities;
- Favour the institution of new partnerships and the exchange of experiences and good practice among the partners.

A European Voluntary Service project (EVS) allows a young person to volunteer in a foreign country for a limited period of time, usually between 6 and 12 months. In this case too there are three partners in the project: the volunteer, the sending organization and the host organization. The volunteers will be part of activities in the environment, arts and culture sectors and in activities involving children, youths or the elderly. These activities take place in a country different from the one where the volunteer resides, are non-profit and unpaid, offer additional value to the local community, do not substitute work activities and are temporary (up to 12 months).

Action 3 – Youth initiatives –"Future Capital" Projects This action supports youth initiative and creativity, enabling the volunteers to share their experiences and the skills acquired during their service as European volunteers with their community and other young people. This action also provides for activities supportive of professional and personal development of the volunteers.

"Future Capital" aims at making the most of the experiences acquired during the voluntary service with follow- ups for the volunteers by the host and the sending organization.

Action 4 – Joint actionsThe joint actions goal is to render complementary and to promote the interaction to a European level of the different community programs in education (SOCRATES), training (LEONARDO DA VINCI), and YOUTH. Joint actions can be provided for also outside the Education and Culture General Directorate.

Action 5 –Support Measures

The support measures aim is to assist those operating in youth related areas or those interested in young people issues and in the preparation and development of projects and initiatives within the Youth programme. The action specifically aims at supplying assistance to the development and carrying out of the four main actions of the youth programme and to contribute in promoting and strengthening the European politics for the young, encouraging and favouring more cooperation with third countries.

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

The countries entitled to be part of all the five actions of the programme are the 15 states members of the European Union, the pre-admission countries, the EFTA countries members of the European Economic Space. All the projects within the YOUTH programme must involve at least one state member of the European Union. The third countries can only take part in the execution of projects concerning Youth for Europe (action 1), European Voluntary Service (action 2) and support Measures that back up the single actions (action 5).

Partner countries

In the pilot project, France, Spain and England have been singled out as European partners. This allowed to highlight the substantial normative differences in the matter of the civilian service system among the single states and to test the project with different kinds of volunteer organization such as:

- in France - Association Solidarités Jeunesses - Poitou Charentes;
- in the United Kingdom - International Projects Centre St James' High School (Exeter);
- in Spain - Junta de Castilla y Leòn - Direcion general de Deporte y Juventud.

At first, also the German partner ViVe joined the programme; unfortunately its availability was not matched by the young women voluntaries because of a limited knowledge of the language.

Local authorities

Department for Social Affairs - Volunteers Office, outlining the main features of the "Young Women in Civilian Service project", retained opportune to limit the testing of the initiative to a restricted group of local authorities spread over the national territory, already active in the field of civilian service and in volunteering, in order to render more incisive the initiative testing and the monitoring and evaluation. Some of the selected local authorities had already tried the structured employment of young women in voluntary service.

Compliant to these four criteria, initially four Municipalities were included in the experiment, the municipality of Turin, Rome, Bologna, Padua, to be joined later also by Cori Municipality, Massa Carrara Province, Reggio Emilia Municipality, Parma Province and Mantua Municipality. The Municipality of Napoli and Palermo had been considered for the initial trial group, but the operative conditions for their inclusion in the programme were not created.

The local authorities had a wide action margin concerning the outlining and implementation of the various stages of the initiative. This allowed the analysis of very different local experiences, often with very marked connotations. For example, some municipalities decided to use the female volunteers in ad hoc projects, aimed at involving the same within the local administrations, with well-defined goals and finalities over the time and in the expected results. Instead, others employed the young women in socially useful structures and activities already consolidated and tested.

The tender

In every municipality, the female civilian service project has been published by a public tender drafted by the same Local Authorities, after setting the criteria and general modalities, that had been agreed upon at a national level. Much work has been spent on the training, in order to guarantee an experience that would become an opportunity of professional growth, and not only human. Particular attention has been given to the singling out of those incentives that could make the civilian service "attractive" to young women. The national coordination served to create a framework for testing a diversified range of incentives.

Intervention Areas
During the civilian service trial period the young women were engaged in different intervention fields:
- Personal care and service work;
- Work with minors at risk;
- Support of youth labour;
- Urban quality and safety;
- Artistic and cultural heritage protection;
- Care, culture and citizenship of women;
- Educational support of the disadvantaged youth;

I.3 Test goals and expected results

The pilot project aimed at verifying the possibility of:

A. Involving regions, local authorities and young female volunteers in the testing of the initiative: "Young women in civilian service"

a) Setting up a voluntary civilian service on behalf of young women to be inserted in projects of social value;

b) Involving regional and local authorities and enhancing the experiences and the active proposals in this field;

c) Working on the volunteers' abilities and interests to enhance their professional and work potential (bottom-up approach) to centralise the user need.

B. Analysing the possibility of reproducing and transferring the female voluntary civilian service in temporarily and geographically diverse contexts

d) Observing the contingent institutional contest, i.e.: the presence of local, national, and community institutional subjects interested in the project;

e) Verifying the demand of young people for a voluntary civilian service;

f) Finding and granting incentives that could render the initiative attractive on a training and occupational level;

g) Providing a good intervention planning at a local level.

C. Enhancing the European Voluntary Service (EVS) experience within the Italian civilian service;

D. Supply the European debate with useful hints and elements for the connection between the national civilian service and the EVS

PART II – Initiative monitoring and evaluation

II .1 Introduction

Together with the implementation of the DSA coordinated project " Young women in civilian service" a monitoring and evaluation activity has been provided for the entire programme, carried out by the CISP (International Commitee for the Development of People) as support measure of the EVS community programme.
The monitoring and evaluation activity (M&E) deals with the pilot project as a whole, still taking into consideration its several stages of national and european dimensions.
The M&E general goal was to verify the soundness of the hypothesis and instruments set up in the programme "Young women in civilian service", and also to verify the possibility of the repetition in different contexts starting from the analysis of its strong and weak points.
The M&E final stage is the publishing of the results. The M&E final goal is to inform and to sensitize european, national and local institutions as well as youth associations of the new context that is shaping up for the civilian service. The test results are highlighted, on the italian part, in order to tune up criteria and conditions to valorise the new law on the civilian service as a once in a lifetime opportunity of training and personal experience for thousands of young men and women. On the european part, the results are highlighted so as to put into use the problems and opportunities shown in the pilot project. The diffusion of the results on a European level should stimulate the debate about the coordination of the national policies both on civilian and on the European civilian service.
In synthesis the M&E objectives were:
a) to note the motivations of young women concerning the civilian service completed in Italy and in respect to the European voluntary service;
b) to record the quality, the quantity and the efficiency of the incentives proposed by the local authorities to the young women;
c) to gather information on the different modalities and approaches to the training used in different places;
d) to provide information on the project implementation problem areas;
e) to verify the EVS impact on the civilian service ratings and on the civilian service demand;
f) to promote the exchange of information and competences among various parts involved in the management and promotion of the civilian service in Italy, the young female civilian service and in the EVS community action;
g) to promote a favourable environment for the consolidation of a support programme for the female civilian service;
h) to gather and process data to use for possible future European civilian service "plans".

A description of the project progress was expected highlighting:

- modalities of local partners and parts involved;
- ratio of young women participating in the project;
- criteria for finding and selecting young female volunteers;
- training programme and contents;
- content of the incentives available on local and national level;
- criticism and success factors of the service completed in Italy or abroad by the volunteers and level of their satisfaction.

The points synthesized above have been monitored and evaluated using questionnaires and structured interviews handed to the local authorities, to their partners, and to the female volunteers, and also through meetings and territorial focus-groups on different issues important for the parts involved in the project, through visits to the young women during the civilian service in Italy and abroad and through the study of the documentation.

The pilot project has been "read" as a dynamic social phenomenon, formed by multiple subjects, each with its own "function goal" and strategically interacting.

From the methodological point of view, the pilot experience implementation featured, necessarily, a dynamic process in continuous evolution to which all the partners of the initiative participated.

The evaluation was articulated in a first qualitative analysis, then in a second of a qualitative- quantitative kind.The first analysis approach was inspired from the *"case study"* method, thus considering every organization part of the initiative in its specific unit (social-economic context, local partnership...). On an operative level, this meant a vertical monitoring and evaluation of the project (telephone interviews, deep field interviews, focus groups) that turned into the collection and systematisation of a number of qualitative and quantitative information, finalized to the compilations of cards to be used in the intermediate and final analysis.

The second analysis of a qualitative-quantitative kind consisted in the handing out of a structured questionnaire to the young women that took part in the local initiatives and by which the information was collected about profiles, orientations and satisfaction towards the single initiatives. 124 young women joined the project and 97 of them completed the 10 months of civilian service. The monitoring and evaluation activity focused on the latter.

Special attention was paid devoted to the different experiences set up by the local authorities, with a synthetic evaluation on the structural aspects of the single initiatives whose flow charts are enclosed later.

Work method -Participative evaluation

The evaluation had to able to enhance the active role of the involved institutions prompting them to favour the use of the emerging results.

The often inadequate feedback between the project managers and the beneficiaries, the need for project management to understand the local social-economic situation were the main reasons for suggesting the use of a participative evaluation approach.

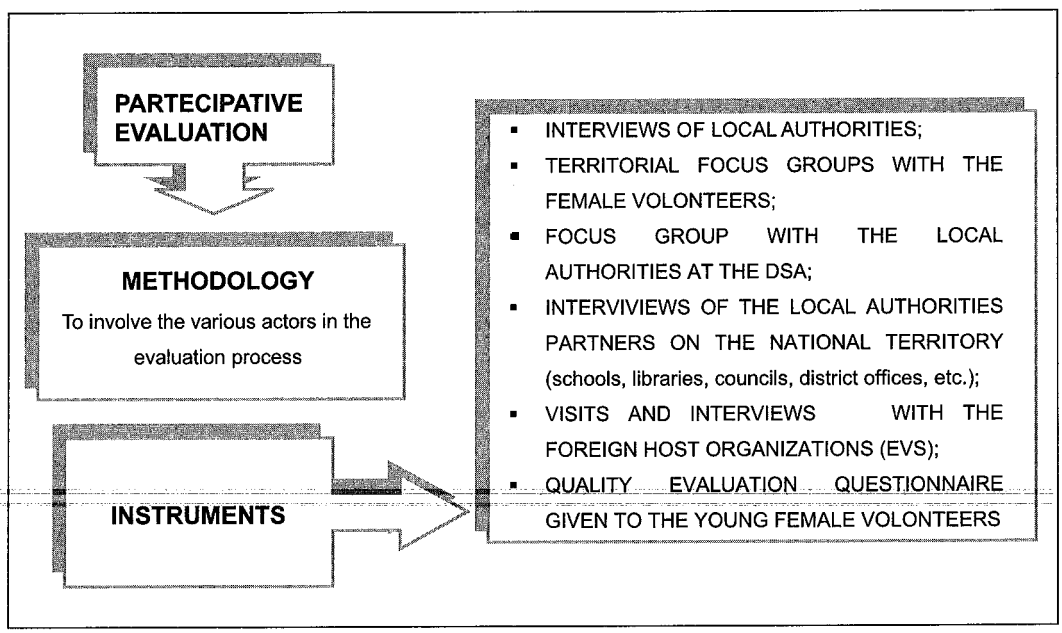
Since many took part in the decision process, the task for the evaluation was to understand the mainstream logic governing the procedure.
The chosen method was the "research-action" (meaning a research completed in strict collaboration with social parts involved, and, as a consequence, not invasive) and the so-called "inquiry from below" (meaning a "field" research, and also a research within an ad hoc structure set up at the Department for Social Affairs). This way, the different participants to the initiative have been actively involved in the monitoring and evaluation stages. The participants themselves were interested in the evaluation results. In particular, the following features of the participative evaluation, characterized the completed evaluation:

- Sharing of responsibilities and procedures with the interested parts;
- Valorisation of the parts themselves as "active resource";
- Emphasis on the collaboration processes

The instrument used to involve the parts in the evaluation process were:

- Interviews with the local authorities;
- Territorial focus groups with the female volunteers;
- Focus group at the Department for Social Affairs (DSA) with all the local authorities;
- Interviews of the local authorities partners on the territory (school, libraries, time banks, etc);
- Interviews with the reception organizations part of the EVS programme (foreign countries);
- Evaluation questionnaire handed out to the female volunteers.

Chart I – Work method



II.2 Project partecipation

At the beginning 124 young women, selected by 9 local administrations, took part in the testing of the pilot project " Young women in civilian service", but only 97 volunteers completed the ten months of civilian service

Tab. 2- *Projects progress statement in April 2001*

SENDING ORGANIZATION	Start Date	Closing date	Selected young women	Young women that completed the service	% completed /selected
Bologna Municipality	Feb.-99	Dic. 99	34	29	85.3 %
Turin Municipality	Nov.-99	Sept. 00	17	17	100.0 %
Rome Municipality	May-99	Sept. 00	30	20	66.7 %
Padova Municipality	Mar. - 99	Jan. –00	7	5	71.4 %
Cori Municipality	Nov. –99	Sept. 00	7	6	85.7 %
Massa Carrara Province	May – 99	Mar. 00	6	2	33.3 %
Mantova Municipality	Jan. 00	Apr. 01	5	5	100.0 %
Parma Province	Jun. - 00	Apr. 01	10	7	70.0 %
Reggio Emilia Municipality	Nov. - 99	Sept. – 00	8	6	75.0 %
Total			124	97	78.2 %

The percentage of young women that completed the civilian service compared to those selected has been around 80%, with the highest peaks in the Turin and Mantua Municipalities, and the lowest in Massa Carrara, where only 33% of the selected women completed the service.
Concerning this point it is important to highlight how the project was abandoned mostly for professional and personal reasons, only marginally for reasons directly connected to the contents and the management of the civilian service experience.

II.3 Local partnership, involved subjects and their roles

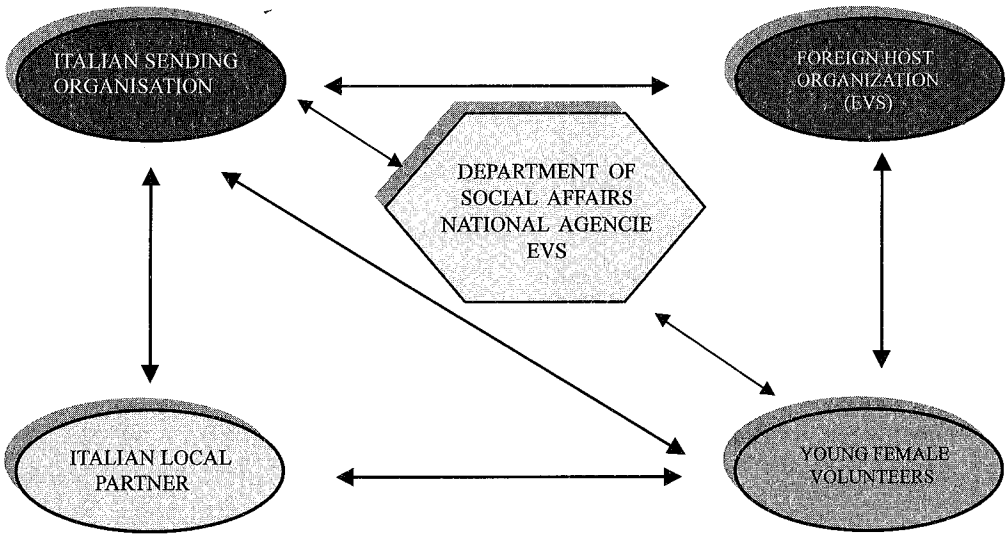
Various subjects on local, national and european level took part in the project:

- The Department for Social Affairs (DSA) – Bureau of Voluntary work – (with the technical Assistance of Lunaria for the EVS) with the role of co-ordination on a Community and national level.
- The regions, provinces and municipalities that have in many cases initiated partnerships with subjects of the third sector, associations and female organizations.

• Three European host organisations in France, the United Kingdom and Spain;
• Young female volunteers.

In the attempt to define the relational dynamics that have interested these subjects, it is very important to carefully delineate the role and responsibility of each actor in order to consequently assess the intensity and quality of the established relations. The following chart shows the whole system of actions and reactions that has been set in motion to enable experimentation of the pilot project.

Chart 2 – Actions and reactions system activated by the partnership



It appears essential to corroborate the concept of the *sending organisation* and the *host organisation* in order to facilitate and make an immediate reading of the partnership scheme.

- A *sending organisation*, in our specific case the local authorities, proposes a launch project which plans for preparation and training of one or more volunteers in social initiatives and co-ordinates their placements within the reception organisations.
- A *host organisation,* corporation, association or local authority, elaborates a *host project* that anticipates the disposition and capacity to accept one or more volunteers and their non-profit-making involvement in the social, environmental and cultural field.

The Department for Social Affairs, acting as the co-ordinator of the pilot project together with the structure of technical assistance has been the authority responsible for the direction of the various initiatives carried out on the territory of the local organisations.

The DSA in particular, has in collaboration with the structure of technical assistance been occupied in:

- Harmonizing various initiatives, impelling confrontation and contact with the involved local organisations;
- Identifying foreign partners, organizing various meetings between the state partners and the sending organisation;
- Guiding local organisations not familiar with the EVS by means of informative and training action;
- Providing, where necessary, assistance to the young women in collaboration with the sending organisation during the whole period of their civilian service abroad.

The local organisations, such as *sending organisations* for the EVS and promotion entities of the project "Young women in civilian service" of the territory, have been responsible for the following actions:

- Identification and/or elaboration of the social projects on the territory (contacts with territorial organisations);
- Presentation of the tender and information on the project on a territorial level;
- Selection and insertion of the young female volunteers;
- Initial preparation and training phase of the young women (at times also linguistic);
- In Italy, maintenance of contacts with the young women and the projects in which they were placed;
- Abroad, maintenance of contacts with the volunteers and the host organisation (in collaboration with the DSA);
- Follow-up of the young women. The sending organisation, at the end of the service pursued by the young women, had the duty of providing assistance by informing them of other opportunities in the Youth programme (project "Capital Future") helping them at pinpointing new educational courses, at finding work opportunities.

The *host organisation,* identified for the service abroad, took care of the following actions:

- Linguistic training of the young female volunteers;
- Service training;
- Volunteer support;
- Board and lodging for the young women during their stay abroad.

Also the young volunteers, by participating in the initiative, have taken on commitments towards the community and local administration. They have "voluntarily" committed themselves to experience active citizenship and informal education in order to gain social, cultural and personal aptitudes. This implicated the undertaking of responsibility and commitment to fulfil their assigned tasks in favour of the local community.

II.4 The selection criteria of the female volunteers

The number of applications for participating in the initiative has in certain territories been superior to the expectations of the single local administrations, so much so that various corporations had to proceed in a pre-emptive selection of the young women according to

predetermined criteria, and in two cases, initiate a second experimentation phase (Municipalities of Turin and Cori).
In any case, registrar information was a mandatory condition for participating in the project.
In general, the selection was carried out with individual interviews by a commission composed of representatives of local corporations and experts. The adopted assessment criteria can by way of illustration be traced to the following aspects:

- presence of strong motivation for an experience in civilian service;
- coherence between the expectations of the young women and the content of the experience;
- previous experience in volunteer work;
- knowledge, even basic, of a foreign language.

The criteria used by the local organisations in the selection process of the volunteers are not homogeneous. In fact, certain municipalities have agreed that the voluntary civilian service is an opportunity for the young women to gain familiarity in the social world of Italy and abroad that can be used in further experience: technical skills, familiarity of the "social" and the acquisition of a language. On the other hand, other municipalities recognized in the civilian service the opportunity for young women who are less "*accustomed*" to the jargon of the social and have less work skills and experience. The two attitudes have no doubt also influenced the accent put on the various selection criteria during the assessment of the candidates.

II.5 Content and quality of the training programme

All projects and planned activities on a local level have scheduled, besides a specific activity in the field, also an interdisciplinary training process, which include contents of a general, technical and linguistic nature. It has been thought to realize the training course contemporaneous with the courses of the conscientious objectors in service, but only on rare occasions has this proposal been set in motion. The local organisations in partnership with the territorial subjects have produced among the processes diversified processes per period, content and procedure. The central co-ordination of the project has tried to guarantee continuous exchange of information so as to facilitate the sharing of the best methodological and didactic experiences.

Tab. 3 - *Type of received information*

What kind of training did you receive?		
V27	Totale*	%
General	34	46,6%
Specific	22	30,1%
Linguistic	17	23,3%
(no answer)		0,0%
Total	73	100,0%

** Young women who returned the assesstment questionnaire. (More answers).*

The type of the received training has been for 46.6% of the cases general and superficial (basic training), for 30%, specific to the service in which the young women would participate and for 23.3%, a linguistic training.

From the analysis of the training programmes, it is possible to identify a general frame of training proposals emerged from the experimentation and can be summarized in the following table:

MODULE	CONTENTS
BASIC SUPERFICIAL AND MOTIVATIONAL TRAINING	a) Expectations and motivation towards the service; b) Legislative information; c) Civic education; d) Knowledge of organisations and authorities; e) Discussions on various topics of social and civic interest.
TECHNICAL-SPECIALISED TRAINING FUNCTIONAL TO THE ASSIGNED SERVICE	f) Operative instruments: team work; g) Contact between the staff and team work; h) Managerial and organisational aspects; i) Technical specialised basics on the service to be carried out; j) Subject elaboration.
CULTURAL AND LINGUISITC TRAINING RELEVANT TO THE EXPERIENCE EVS	k) Basic linguistic knowledge; l) Cultural education; m) Presentation of the programme EVS and of the "Capital future" project

The structure of the educative programmes is interesting as it highlights the coexistence of the three types of training within one training process: only in 7% of the cases the young volunteers have received all three types of training, 26.3% of the young women have received a basic superficial and motivational training and 22.8% a technical specialised training functional to the assigned service. The percentage of young women who have taken up a linguistic training is much lower, but this has been a consequence of the EVS experience that covered a linguistic module in the host phase.

Tab. 4 – *Didactic structure in the training course*

Didactic structure in the training course	Totale*	%
Basic training/ Special training	13	22,8%
Basic training/ Linguistic training	6	10,5%
Special training/ Linguistic training	2	3,5%
Only basic training	15	26,3%
Only special training	7	12,3%
Only linguistic training	5	8,8%
All three	4	7,0%
No training	5	8,8%
General total	57	100,0%

** Young women who returned the assessment questionnaire.*

Factors of criticality and success of the training course proposed to the young volunteers

In the analysis of the factors of criticality of the training course it is absolutely necessary to affirm the functionality that has taken form in the pilot project. For many young volunteers this experience has represented a first contact with the job world, taking them closer to attitudes that jobs require (commitment, responsibility, rights) and to the executive work structure (organisation principles, work division, team work). The training process therefore had to act as a guide and support for the volunteers during the course of the project. In the light of this, the general opinion that emerges from the assessment of the training process is not entirely positive. In many cases in fact, the training only concerned the beginning of the initiative: the orientation and presentation of the activities in which the young women would be involved. There were several training days on various topics of social and civic interest, but their contents did not reach adequate depth and lacked methodology.

In the attempt to reconcile the training of the young volunteers with that of the conscientious objectors, major difficulties in management and logistics concerning training were detected. This often determined considerable delays in the set up of projects with justified discontent of the young women. With regards to the EVS experience, a very high percentage of the young women (90% of the volunteers) have complained about the necessity of improving the organisation and co-ordination of the training between the sending organisation and the host organisation in order to create a continuity in the training process in the two stages, and to nurture a major coherence between the received training and the performed work activity.

Moreover it is important to consider, apart from the training for the young volunteers, also training for the managers of the civilian service, *"(...) to allow the organisation that receives the young volunteers to interpret the social function of assistance to the collectivity correctly respecting the behaviour and motivation of the individual at the same time.(...)"*[2]

2 From *"Per un modello di Servizio Civile"* by the Regional Council of Social Policies of the Region Emilia Romagna.



A new professional figure

It is important to create a new professional figure that is able to interpret and mediate the needs of corporation efficiency and the effectiveness of the various provided services with the needs of the correct use and enhancement of skills, emotions and knowledge of the young volunteers.

Several functions are required:

- Planning, realisation and assessment of the interventions of the Civilian Service with reference to the purpose of the agreed upon corporation;
- Management of the activities and resources relating to the Civilian Service;
- Definition of the training interventions coherent with the attainment of the skills scheduled in the planning of the service to be performed;
- Assessment of the coherence of the activated training courses with regard to the characteristics and purpose of the related service;
- Control of the execution of the project in respect to the purpose of the corporations and expectations of the objectors.

During the regional experimentation of the Civilian Service the Region of Emilia Romagna has initiated two training courses for the professional figure of manager of the Civilian Service that each lasts for 14 days, for a total of 48 hours.

The training process is broken down into nine modules regarding:

1. Course presentation

2. Analysis of the organisational contest: the reception

3. Analysis of the institutional and legislative domain and the organisational contest of the project

4. The planning in the social and training domain. Case and instrument analysis.

5. Co-ordination introduction

6. The operative instruments of the co-ordination: team work

7. The training: analysis of the demand, training planning

8. Social intervention assessment in particular of the training

9. Balance relative to the construction of the role of the manager of the Civilian Service



A training proposal: the region Emilia Romagna

Still within the research for the definition of *a model civilian service* the council of social policies of the Region Emilia Romagna has also proposed a training course for the training of young people in the Civilian Service that could constitute a starting point for the definition of a minimum standard of training.

The proposed training course has been divided into two sectors. The first is of a training and general nature which is the same for everyone irrespective of type of work and based upon four topics:

- The Civilian Service rules (8 hours)
- Job market approach (12 hours)
- Type and structure of the corporations that employ the young people: the principle functions and their internal structure (16 hours)
- Information about the Region: present institutional order (4 hours)

The second sector is of variable duration about the specific contents of the work that the young volunteers were employed in and therefore strictly functional to the experience they were building-up.

II.6 The civilian service of the young female volunteers

In upholding the national and international dimension of the pilot project, it is important to distinguish the experience of the civilian service on a local and foreign level in order to clearly highlight the positive and negative aspects of the double experimentation and to identify the contact and divergence elements.
Looking at the experience of the volunteers in Italy, the young women were employed in various intervention areas: social and assistance interventions, services for the youth and citizens, cultural promotion, protection of the cultural and environmental heritage. There was a high percentage of young women that involved themselves in services for assisting the disabled (21.1%), the elderly (8.8%) and children (8.8%). Equally high were the activities in cultural promotion (26.3%) and conservation of the artistic heritage (7.0%).
Next to the more traditional welfare services we find analysis and restoration of monumental and historic estates, construction of thematic passages, management of cultural activities and assistance to growing microenterprises. This vast range of applications has enabled a strong representation to be given to the chosen sample by widening the traditional field of applications that are reserved to the civilian service.

Tab. 5 – *Intervention areas of the service*

Intervention areas of service carried out		
V31	Total	%
Assisting the disable	12	21,1%
Assisting the elderly	5	8,8%
Assisting the immigrants	4	7,0%
Assisting women	3	5,3%
Assisting children	5	8,8%
Assisting handicapped children	1	1,8%
Youth and citizen services	1	1,8%
Cultural promotion	15	26,3%
Safeguarding the artistic heritage	4	7,0%
Institutional activity support	1	1,8%
Other	6	10,6%
General Total	57	100,0%

Factors of criticality and success of the service carried out in Italy

The young women were enthusiastic while performing the assigned duties in the various places of work, even though in certain circumstances the work did not enhance their capacities and skills to the full. This has emphasized, as the coherence of the first choices have an implication on the realisation of the initiative, the necessity of major accuracy in the project definition and selection of the applicants, and a more careful choice of the host organisation in order to let the young women to exploit the experience to the full.
In the types of activity that the young vol-

unteers are employed, in it is beneficial to refer to a classification that distinguishes between:

- primary duties relating to specific activity: e.g. assistance;
- subsidiary duties to specific activity: e.g. secretary;
- ancillary organisational duties: e.g. press review.

All the young women were employed directly in the primary intervention sector of the corporation of the referred project.
In none of the cases have the young women carrying out civilian service substituted the work of the professional operators, but rather always acted as assistants.
Elements of criticality have emerged regarding the coherence of the offered service with the received training that often did not present specific elements necessary to the realisation of the same service.

II.7 The young volunteers and the experience of the European Voluntary Service (EVS)

The experience abroad has certainly been a great incentive for the young women to participate in the initiative. The possibility of completing three of the ten months outside the national frontiers has for many (especially considering the age bracket of the volunteers) meant the occasion to live and work in a different reality and to grasp a foreign language. Not all 97 young women who finished their civilian service decided to carry out a period abroad; only 65 young volunteers took advantage of this opportunity.
The municipality of Mantua, for mandatory terms planned by the EVS programme, did not have the possibility to include the experience abroad in its tender.
The activity abroad was broken down into two annuities during which the young volunteers followed various activities scheduled by the host organisation.
The choice of the state and host organisation was made in relation to the willingness and interest of the young volunteers:

- 7 young women completed their service in France at the Association Solidarités Jeunesses;
- 16 young women in Spain at - Junta de Castilla y Leòn - Direcion general de Deporte y Juventud, Trebol de 4 hojas;
- and 42 in the United Kingdom at the International Projects Centre St James' High School (Exeter).

Tab. 6 – *Volunteers that have participated in the European Voluntary Service*

			HOST COUNTRY			
			SPAIN	ENGLAND	FRANCE	
SENDING ORGANIZATION	Start date	End date	Junta de Castilla y Leon Trebol de 4 hojas	International Projects Centre St James' High School	Association Solidarités Jeunesses	**TOTAL**
Municipality of Rome	1-June-99 1-July-99 20-Jul-99	31-Aug-99 1-Oct-99 20-Oct-99	7	 11	 2	**20**
Municipality of Bologna	1-June-99 15-July-99 20-Sept-99	31-Aug-99 15- Oct-99 21 Dec-99	2	 9	1	**12**
Municipaly of Padova	1-July-99 27-Sept-99	1-Oct-99 31-Dec-99		 4	1	**5**
Municipaly of Turin	1-May-00 15-May-00	31-July-00 15-Aug-00	5	 10		**15**
Province of Massa Carrara	20-July-99	21-Oct-99			2	**2**
Municipaly of Reggio Emilia	19-June-00	19-Sept-00		4		**4**
Municipaly of Cori	15-May-00	15-Aug-00		1		**1**
Province of Parma	18-Sept-00 25-Sept-00 25-Sept-00	17-Dec-00 24-Dec-00 24-Dec-00	2	 3	 1	**6**
TOTAL			**16**	**42**	**7**	**65**

* The municipality of Mantua has not been able to participate in the EVS programme due to mandatory terms fixed by the project.

All young women upon arriving at the host organisation abroad attended a language and orientation course on the uses and customs of the partner country, together with young volunteers of other European countries. The course duration and realisation procedure differ from state to state, nevertheless it concerned a period of two to four weeks. The training meetings on arrival were aimed at the initial inclusion of the young women in the country and the ambient they were hosted in and to mutual acquaintance.
Once the activity and the placement of the young volunteers were set the young women worked individually in single projects proposed by the host organisations.
The principle topics treated by the projects were:

- in France
  - projects of assisting the disabled and children
  - youth animation and information projects
  - work camps, cultural heritage restoration
- in England
  - work projects for disadvantaged children and adolescents
  - civilian development projects
  - environmental projects

- In Spain
- Monitor and management projects in youth summer work camps
- Animation projects in youth hostels
- Social-cultural animation for children and adolescents
- Activities in collaboration with civilian centres.

By interviewing the young women we have learned that the personal skills they developed thanks to their experience abroad are mainly of a relational nature:

- ability to work in a team;
- resolving conflicts;
- handling problematic situations;
- capacity of adapting to changes.

Integration of the young women in EVS projects was excellent during the whole period of the programme except for some problems at the beginning of the activity, due in most cases to language difficulties.

At the end of the initiative, in all host countries, three meeting days were organised to allow the young women and the host organisation to express their opinions and valuation of the EVS experience.

The young volunteers who completed the three-month-experience abroad in the sphere of the project "EVS and National Civilian Service", have received or will receive, a certificate signed by the Member of the European Commission responsible for the programme. This certificate confirms the realisation of the voluntary service period and describes in detail the accomplished activity of the young volunteers.

The *EVS certificate* represents a new innovative form of certification that declares on a European level, the attainment of skills through informal learning. It has to be said though that in certain cases young women obtained their certificate with delay which defeated the effectiveness of the certificate and the "incentive" of participating in the programme.

The role of the co-ordination of the Department for Social Affairs and the organisation, that at the time took care of the technical assistance in the EVS programme, and the non-governmental association Lunaria, were fundamental in creating conditions and contacts for the realisation of the experience abroad.

Factors of criticality and success of the service carried out abroad

Elements of criticality emerged due to the complex management of relations between the national and foreign organisations. This criticality has touched only a few authorities for whom the willingness to plan better future experiences of this kind has become a focal point of attention and effort.

With reference to the intervention of the service realised during the EVS experience, many young women have emphasized the non correspondence between the contents of the experience abroad and the Italian one. This criticism nevertheless has not interfered with the final result of the initiative but has created some difficulties in the initial integration in the host organisation.

II.8 Pilot project development incentives

The theme of "incentives" represents for the initiative under examination, one of the essential questions for its success and future development.
In forming the characteristics of the pilot project, the Department for Social Affairs, as the national co-ordination structure of the European Voluntary Service programme paid a lot of attention to the theme, especially regarding EVS, by trying to take advantage of all the opportunities that the Community programme has to offer the young women. In particular conditions have been created for:

- letting the young volunteers take part in a EVS project of three months abroad;
- and giving them the chance to present "Future Capital" projects once their civilian service has ended.

The "Future Capital" projects particularly represent initiatives linked to the Community Youth Action Programme with which the European Commission supports the creativity and initiative of the young people that complete a project of the European Voluntary Service of more than six months.
Within the experimentation of the pilot project "Young women in Civilian Service", under exceptional circumstances, the possibility of presenting the volunteers with personal development projects also after only three months of EVS has been foreseen.
Thanks to this opportunity, two young volunteers from the municipality of Turin, had the chance to attend a course of antic books restoration in Switzerland which gave them the opportunity to develop and refine their knowledge and skills acquired during the civilian service.
However it is necessary to emphasise that the pilot project has not taken full advantage of the offered opportunities by the Community programme "Future Capital". The lack of information and initiative promotion at a local level by the national co-ordination are probably the cause of this, together with the lack of equipment utilization training by the local promotion corporations. All in all, only a limited number of young women have had or wanted to take advantage of this opportunity. In the future it will be necessary to provide specific training and guidance to the young women in order to assist them in their project and their personal development.



The Future Capital project

The "Future Capital" project represents a Community follow-up measure for those who have already completed a period of at least six months in the EVS programme giving the possibility of applying those experiences and skills acquired during the service carried out as a volunteer. In fact the action supports the initiatives and creativity of the young volunteers by offering them the chance to experiment with their ideas and to pass on the experience and skills they have acquired on they voluntary service to the community and to other young people.

The "Future Capital" projects can be carried out in all the participating countries in the EVS initiatives. The following three types of projects are eligible for assistance:

- set up projects of professional activity, with or without profit;
- single projects, such as organisation of an event or of a particular activity, the realisation of a particular product or result before a specific deadline;
- personal development projects, in which the participants receive a formal or informal training in order to obtain the official recognition of the acquired skills of the young volunteers during the European Voluntary Service.

The project should in any case last no longer than one year and should be launched before two years of the termination of the voluntary service.

The Community financing of the "Future Capital" project is based upon a flat-rate price taken as a reference price that may not be over 5,000 _ and may vary according to the country in which the activity is carried out. The funding value depends on the level of priority of the selected project. The projects that are considered for eligibility for funding are in fact broken down into three priority levels that correspond to different levels of disbursement, varying from 100% to 50%.

Other incentives

There were various efforts, both on a local and national level, to produce ways of enhancement, monetary and non (study grants, cost reimbursement, training credits) that support, or at least meet the young volunteers needs halfway.

All the local administration in fact agree that the female civilian service should not be an "attractive" experience only because it is generally a positive one, but that the service should correspond to a system of incentives and a consequent certificate recognition, applicable both in the continuation of their studies and in the job market.

The incentives that very frequently proposed, and in some cases have been experimented by the various local administrations are:

- *formal* as well as essential recognition of the offered service through a valid European certificate that assumes a certain value in the job market;
- offer of a structured training (possibly applicable in the job market);
- concessions of training credit;
- disbursement of study grants that cover the costs;
- recognition of ten months of welfare service;
- loans/grants paid out at the end of the service, for auto-entrepreneurship projects;
- varied work periods whether concerning the whole project period (6/10 months) or as daily work (30/36 hours);

- duty of the employers to re-employ the young women in the organisation at the end of the civilian service;
- recognition of the civilian service as a valid university training period.

An opinion

The province of Parma, dissociating itself from the general opinion, asserts how the incentives should materialize in the effort to offer the young people a more gratifying experience both on a personal and professional level:

"(...) A volunteer feels satisfied when he/she realizes to be of use to someone else (...)".

The question raised by the administration however is delicate. Its complexity resides in the nature of the project "Voluntary Civilian Service"; on one hand the significance of the term "voluntary", linked to the concept of gratuitousness is tried not to be distorted, and on the other hand, one tries to assure the young women (employed for ten months and in the majority of cases full-time) a certificate for the duty and the demonstrated enthusiasm, furthermore to make the training experience inviting relating to the personal and professional development level of the volunteers.
This problem is raised in similar terms and quantitatively more relevant for the new law on the voluntary civilian service (L. n.64/2001) both in the transitional phase and in the act of its definitive implementation. It is unquestionable that valid incentives will be identified on national level and others to be activated on a local level. Up till now, the normative in this sense has been limited to provide its mere presence without giving precise indications for the concrete application of these incentives.

II. 9 Other general problematic elements ermerged from the project experimentation

From the experimentation of the initiative apart from the already signalled elements, some practical problems have emerged that have highlighted organisational and managerial, though modifiable aspects of the project:

- The co-ordination, fragmentation of the referees and initiatives, problems in partner relationships;
- The administrative management of the volunteers, inconsistency between the inflexibility of the contract rules and the flexible management of the standard practise, delays in the payment of the "daily allowance";
- The operative project organisation, at the start of the initiative lack the necessary instruments and resources for launching the activity;
- The sending organisation, delays by the host countries in communicating the necessary information at departure-time.

II.10 Results of local study cases

Introduction

The concise forms reported below give an overview of the individual local study cases and allow to gather useful and detailed information about the project implementation conditions in the various municipalities that agreed to the initiative. These forms particularly underline the following: adopted selection criteria, contents and quality of training directed to the volunteers, quality of the activated local network, critical elements and considerations deriving from experimentation.

A) MUNICIPALITY OF BOLOGNA

PROJECT START-UP / END DATE:	FEBRUARY 1999 – DECEMBER 1999
NO. OF SELECTED YOUNG WOMEN:	34
NO. OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO COMPLETED THE CIVILIAN SERVICE:	29 (12 performed the *European Voluntary Service)*

HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

(...) The idea to extend the civilian service experience to women has distant origins. Already before this initiative, nationally promoted by the Department for Social Affairs (DSA), the Municipality of Bologna, Council for Social-sanitary Policies, a civilian service experimentation to be extended to young female volunteers had been theorized. However, the actual project implementation took several months: indeed, the project was carried out only after the DSA constituted a coordination table (...).

According to the interviewee, the coordination role played by the Department for Social Affairs became essential to solve those problems that emerged especially during the design phase (drawing up of a call to tender, operating programme planning, training course elaboration).

(...) Just as in any new experience, several open questions emerged both during the design phase and ongoing stage; it is often difficult to find an answer to these questions, because it is not easy to make comparisons with other realities that have been carried out or are currently carrying out the same initiative. Upon the evidence reported by other Municipalities during the meetings held in Rome, we were able to gain useful ideas for solving the difficulties as they came up (...).

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The works to draw up the project started in autumn 1998, whereas the activities operatively started in February 1999.

The project was advertised by a public call to tender. It was directed to 50 young women between 18 and 25 years of age with domicile and/or residence in Bologna.

The following communicative tools were used to advertise the initiative:

- press conference and related diffusion on local newspapers and TV networks;
- commercials on the most popular local radio networks having a young audience;
- posting of placards in the streets, distribution of leaflets in central and Province Public Relations Department offices, and in youth aggregation places (such as universities, youth centres, libraries, etc.);
- advertising on buses;
- sending of a letter signed by the Mayor to all the young women possessing the necessary requisites as prescribed in the call to tender.

The Municipality of Bologna received 159 applications. The call to tender required the indication

of a preferential project area to be chosen among the following:
- personal care and service work;
- urban quality and safety;
- historic and artistic heritage preservation;
- women's care, culture and citizenship;
- female-run small enterprise and entrepreneurial activity.

SELECTION

The selection was carried out through individual interviews. The adopted assessment criteria were the following:
- personal motivation (assessed with a score of 0 to 10 points);
- previous experience in the service areas contemplated in the call to tender (assessed with a score of 0 to 5 points);
- knowledge of a foreign language (assessed with a score of 0 to 5 points).

103 young women came to the individual interview, (65% of the young women who had sent the application). Only 34 of the 50 volunteers contemplated in the call to tender were started off on the civilian service, and 29 of these completed the training and the civilian service; 12 of these young women also did their service abroad.

(...) Some young women asked to leave the project while in progress due to some discontent caused by delays in the initiative start-up and the lack of training recognition mentioned in the public call to tender connected to a framework agreement with the University of Bologna. This agreement recognized the activity carried out within the civilian service as a traineeship and a teaching credit in favour of students attending courses at the University of Bologna. Then the agreement failed, thus causing deep discontent for the volunteers (...)

When selecting the applicants any previous experiences in the field of voluntary work were taken into account; on the other hand the young women's social condition played no role in the selection process:

(...) There was a high response to the initiative, and when selecting the young women we favoured those ones who appeared more motivated and skilled. We did not take into account their social condition. We paid special attention in explaining the subject of this initiative to the applicants, specifying that it was not a job (the young women who came in with this expectation were discouraged) but a qualifying training experience both for them and for the services where they would be operating (...).

CONTENTS AND QUALITY OF TRAINING DIRECTED TO THE VOLUNTEERS

The training course proposed to the young women coincided with the course established by the Region of Emilia Romagna for conscientious objectors. It comprised 40 hours of training (structured into 4 modules lasting 4 hours each, for a total of 10 weekly/fortnightly meetings between March and June 1999) on the following four themes:
- Norms regulating the civilian service;

• Tools and methods to access the world of labour;
• Nature and structure of bodies and organizations involved in the project;
• Information and news about the Region of Emilia Romagna;
• Self-assessment of the experience.

For organizational and logistic reasons, the trainees (200 boys and 38 young women) were subdivided into three homogeneous macro-groups according to the areas:

• Social Area;
• Technical Area;
• Associations.

The training course organization was managed by the Training Sector of the Municipality of Bologna. The teachers were selected among the internal administration personnel according to their specific skills on the course topics and in cooperation with the tutors. Along with this "general" course, each area and/or operating unit planned further training opportunities, which were specifically oriented to the particularities of each service. On the contrary, no teaching activity was directed to the young women as regards language training. Only 60 of the 120 contemplated hours of training were held at the Town Hall. The remaining 60 hours, which examined more specific issues, took place at the service offices where the young women were operating subsequently. However, specific training was not compulsory. It was at the discretion of the operators in charge of the young women:

(...) The Municipality of Bologna was the only municipality to activate training courses for both objectors and female volunteers and this proved to be very interesting. Indeed, as the tutors reported, the volunteers also showed they were good at involving the young men in the working activities (...).

LOCAL PARTICIPATION: QUALITY OF THE ACTIVATED NETWORK.

The impact of other public and private subjects was quite relevant especially during the initiative design phase. There was an active local participation which contributed considerably to the actual development of this initiative, even though there were several problems with the activated network management under way.

(...) After elaborating some ideas for a provisional project, the Municipality deemed it necessary to involve other subjects for a correct operating planning. The training part of the project was attended to by the Region of Emilia Romagna together with an agency. However, the training courses they contemplated may have been suitable to male civilian service users, but they did not meet the needs and requirements of the young women involved in this experimentation (...).

It is worth mentioning the agreement started between the Municipal Administration and the University of Bologna, which envisaged the civilian service recognition and enhancement in terms of training credits; the agreement failed due to problems related to the structures of both the Municipality and the University.

(...) As we are dealing with partnership and programme agreements, the involved subjects, i.e. the University and the Municipality, have clearly tried to support their interests (which did not always match). However, we

hope that in the future, these kind of initiatives may get better results thanks to a wider consent by the competent organizations (...).

The assessment of cooperation relationships with the institutions is undoubtedly positive.

(...) There was a very good exchange of information among the various bodies and organizations. In some cases, the immediate transfer of information, such as the call-to-tender layout, facilitated the project drawing up, thus accelerating the start-up times for some Municipalities that had been faced with procedural difficulties (...).

CRITICAL ELEMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS DERIVING FROM EXPERIMENTATION

Some critical elements emerged during the project experimentation. These may be summarized as follows:

- lack of recognition of the civilian service experience as a training credit in the university career;
- and organization among the actors involved in the initiative.

The organizational problems have stressed the need for a closer and more direct coordination among all organizations involved in this experience, and especially the need to:

- improve coordination among the involved actors through more frequent exchanges and tests;
- simplify the volunteers' bureaucratic management;
- arrange all necessary tools and resources in time to start up the activities;
- improve the organization of the volunteers' stays abroad.

According to the interviewee, the essential elements to develop and enlarge the project and transform it into a consolidated-practice pilot project are:

(...) the actual and accurate management of human resources devoted to these initiatives and the recognition of the tutor as a more relevant profile within the project. During group meetings, I pointed out this need, because I am convinced that tutors are fundamental for the project success, so they have to be trained accordingly. In fact, they represent the contact between the young women and the hosting bodies and organizations, as they solve and negotiate problems as they arise (...).

B) MUNICIPALITY OF TURIN

PROJECT START-UP / END DATE:	NOVEMBER 1999 – SEPTEMBER 2000
NO. OF SELECTED YOUNG WOMEN [3]:	17
NO. OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO COMPLETED THE CIVILIAN SERVICE:	17 (15 performed the *European Voluntary Service)*

HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

The "Civilian service young women" project experimentation in the Municipality of Turin began in November 1999 and it involved 17 young women between 19 and 22 years of age.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The design works began at the end of 1998; however, due to administrative problems, the initiative dissemination took place only in May 1999. In drawing up the project it proved crucial to have the chance of relying on the experience of other towns (and especially the Municipality of Bologna), with which a strong confrontation and information exchange network was established.
In defining how to implement the female civilian service, the Municipality preferred to conform to the regulation as prescribed for conscientious objectors (such as the obligation to work 36 hours per week).
Special attention was given to the initiative advertising and dissemination through several communicative tools such as the following:

- commercials on the most popular local radio networks having a young audience;
- distribution of leaflets in strategic points in town (such as youth information centres, libraries, etc.)
- sending of informational material to all the young women possessing the necessary requisites as prescribed in the call to tender.

SELECTION

The project was initially addressed to 10 young women only, but the considerable response by the young women and the receipt of 62 applications encouraged the start-up of a second experimentation phase during the first 2000 semester that involved 10 other young women.
The selection was carried out through curricula vitae and individual interviews so as to check the applicants' motivations towards the initiative.

> *(...) During the interviews we asked the young women about their professional and personal expectations as regards this initiative, so as to understand their motivations and thus create favourable conditions to grant them better and actual opportunities of finding a job at the end of the project. The selection also contributed to establish an initial relationship with the female volunteers (...)*

[3] In the call to tender the Municipality had programmed the participation of 10 young women only, but the considerable agreement to the initiative encouraged the local administration to start up a further experimentation phase that involved other 10 young female volunteers.

The adopted selection criteria tried to facilitate these young women presenting more difficulties in entering the world of labour:

- less required diplomas;
- less required vocational qualifications;
- limited working experience;
- limited knowledge of foreign languages.

(...) besides the personal data indicated in the call to tender, a further requisite we decided to adopt in the selection was the social-economic status. Indeed, we decided to favour the subjects with less required qualifications and a professional curriculum without significant experience (...).

The selected young women were all between 19 and 22 years of age (only one of them was 28), and they were not enrolled in university courses (with the exception of the oldest girl); only three volunteers had already attended training courses: two had attended a book and paper documents restoration course (and were later employed in the historical archives), and the third had attended a stage make-up course (and was later employed in the institution's theatre laboratory).

The main motivations that led the young women to respond to the initiatives were mostly the following:

- interest in the initiative;
- training experience abroad (the three-month stay abroad was a determining factor);
- opportunity to present "Future Capital" projects so as to develop their own skills or start up their own business.

The Municipality were very interested in the opportunity for young women to present projects to capitalize their own experiences and it wishes a more active participation and the organization of specific meetings between experts and the volunteers so as to realize "Future Capital" projects that are likely to be successful.

The interviewee underlined the need for the Administration to assign *ad hoc* staff to this project:

(...) it would be opportune for the Administration to assign human resources to manage the project, because having reliable people working exclusively on this initiative would be a very good reference point and results would be better. In order to face the workload during this first experience we asked one the young women to act as project coordinator (...).

One substantial lack the interviewee noticed during the young women's interviews was the lack of a general life project:

(...) it is not easy to explain what is meant with the expression "general life project", but during the interviews it was evident that the young women did not have clear ideas about what they would do as "grown-ups", or about their expectations or ambitions. This convinced us about the need to introduce a specific module in the future experiences about the meaning of planning and planning oneself for both young women and objectors (...).

PREPARATION AND SUPPORT: QUALITY OF TRAINING DIRECTED TO THE VOLUNTEERS

The first experimentation phase began on 16th November 1999 with the training course. Two of the 10 young women left for personal reasons and were immediately replaced. The second phase started in the first 2000 semester.

(...) The selection took place in mid August and in theory the young women should have started the training course by 20th September. However, as it had been established to grant joint training activity to the young women and conscientious objectors, the Ministry's delay to order the dispatching of the objectors caused a subsequent postponement as to the predicted times (these delays discouraged the applicants and favoured abandonment) (...).

TRAINING CONTENTS

The training action contemplated in the project concerned the educational services promoted by the youth organization. The training course was attended jointly by the female volunteers and the objectors.

The training course was structured into five days for a total of thirty hours distributed over two weeks.

FIRST DAY	
Activities • Group reception and constitution. • Collection and sharing of individual expectations as regards the course.	*Objectives* • Creating an atmosphere of confidence and cooperation. • Sharing personal motivations and expectations with the group as regarding the initiative. • Providing the first notions on historical motivations of conscientious objection and on the concept of conscientious objection and civilian service.
SECOND DAY *Activities* • Legal outline, law no. 230/98. • Role plays and considerations.	*Objectives* • Tracing a possible theoretical background for the choice of objection and the civilian service practice. • Providing tools to acquire greater skills in recognising and analysing interpersonal conflict. • Searching the attitudes that facilitate/hinder non-violent transformation of the conflict.
THIRD DAY	
Activities • Conflict in a multicultural city: case study.	*Objectives* • Sensitising towards the active citizenship dimension.

	• Analysing the role of stereotypes and prejudices. • Analysing mediation and negotiation as conflict transformation strategies. • Underlining the value of civilian service, discovering the importance of social status.
FOURTH DAY *Activities* • Confrontation between female volunteers and conscientious objectors with reference to their expectations about the service. • Summing up of the various themes discussed during the four days.	*Objectives* • Exploring ideas about the civilian service, analysing the participants' doubts and uncertainties. • Acquiring necessary skills to cope with administrative procedures.
FIFTH DAY *Activities* • Discussion on training strong and points. • Meeting and reception.	*Objectives* • Assessing the civilian service so as to weak improve the supplied service quality.

At the end of the training phase the volunteers were employed in three different projects.

- The first project – in the social-cultural field – contemplated the employment of the young women in civic libraries committed to promoting young writers, and in the municipal historical archives.
- The second project – in the social charitable field – aimed at the volunteers' introduction into personal care services: one girl worked in a community hosting newborn children with serious health problems, whereas two young women cooperated with two nursery schools by performing a support activity for disabled children.
- The third project – in the social-educational field – contemplated the introduction of the young women into a group of social educators so as to develop animation activities devoted to teenagers and disadvantaged young people.

The female volunteers established a relationship with the objectors only during the training phase. At the beginning the Municipality intended organizing an official meeting between the volunteers and the objectors at least once a month so as to define a more complete monitoring of the performed activities (with respect to a more limited monitoring of the young women's activities only), and to create an occasion for confrontation and socialization. This was not possible due to the Ministry's delay in dispatching the objectors.

LOCAL PARTICIPATION: QUALITY OF THE ACTIVATED NETWORK.

The project's success was determined by the good quality of the activated network on a local level between the public administrations and the associations that hosted the young women. Interest and motivations were very strong. In fact, although the volunteer's activity should never replace the employees' tasks but should support them in the basic activities, many associations could not carry on their activity without the volunteers' work.

The cooperation with the youth information counters inside the Municipality, that contributed in advertising the initiative, was extremely precious.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS DERIVING FROM EXPERIMENTATION

The Turin experience highlighted some critical elements, which proved to be useful for experimentation. These elements are briefly reported below:

- *Training credit*: more relevance to be attributed to training provided during the whole period.
- *Coordination with hosting bodies*: need to jointly organize the young women's specific training so as to define the activities they shall perform in advance, thus avoiding idle times and a distorted use of the young women's service.
- *Project's attribution to specific personnel*: so as to seize all the opportunities that this experience may offer.
- Need to *train internal personnel* so as to make the initiative interface and coordination action more effective and accurate.
- *Organization of a language course* in Italy for the young women who will stay abroad for three months, so as to avoid them being faced with serious difficulties once they reach the foreign hosting body or organization.

C) MUNICIPALITY OF ROME

PROJECT START-UP / END DATE:	NOVEMBER 1999 – SEPTEMBER 2000
NO. OF SELECTED YOUNG WOMEN:	23
NO. OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO COMPLETED THE CIVILIAN SERVICE:	21 (20 performed the *European Voluntary Service)*

HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

The "Civilian service young women" project started in November 1999 upon the extremely successful example of the male civilian service, in an attempt to extend this experience to women.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The Female Civilian Service project was advertised through a public call to tender published in April 1999, which was jointly set up by the 11th Department in Rome and the Citizens' rights office. The initiative was addressed to 30 young women who had to be between 18 and 25 years of age by the call-to-tender expiry date, with domicile and/or residence in the Municipality of Rome and with previous experience in the social, psychological and charitable field.

The project's advertising was aimed at disseminating the initiative to a high number of young women and at explaining the project contents and modes clearly, allowing the potential users' self-selection.

SELECTION

The call to tender reported that in case of a higher number of applications with respect to the available vacancies (after the first selection based on curricula), there would have been a second selection based on an interview; in fact the female volunteers' selection took place in two distinct phases:

- during the first phase the participants filled in a form where they had to specify any previous experience in the field of voluntary work, the motivations why they intended to start this civilian service experience and whether they could speak a foreign language;
- during the second phase they were interviewed by a specially designed commission, which was composed of sociologists and psychologists employed at the Municipality, in the presence of appointed officers and an external president.

The eligible young women were 23. Ten of these were employed in the time bank, the remaining 13 were employed in schools or institutes looking after disabled young people.

(...) the interview was mainly intended to identify young women with a certain amount of social experience and preparation. However, the selection also favoured young women who showed a strong social motivation and a

wish to be put to the test and to make themselves useful for less advantaged people, even though they had not acquired a specific experience in this respect. At the end of the interviews a confrontation between the work group and the commission was necessary to choose the most deserving young women for this kind of experience. (...).

CONTENTS AND QUALITY OF TRAINING DIRECTED TO THE VOLUNTEERS

The project contemplated a training course structured into two classroom modules for a total of 50 hours to be held over the whole period and organized as follows:

- common basic training for all young women on citizenship rights, education to legality, knowledge of the Municipality of Rome, for a total of 20 hours;
- specific training on the individual projects contents, for a total of 30 hours.

According to the interviewee, training was traditional and very specific:

- during the first phase the young women worked together with the time bank group and they examined the relational and motivational aspects between service providers and receivers;
- during the second phase the course was oriented to more specific issues related to the field of handicaps, some legal aspects on this matter, the origin of school integration, relational dynamics and the meaning of reception with reference to the handicapped.

Training was given during the first and the last project implementation phases; during the intermediate phase the young women went abroad.

During the *focus groups* meetings, the Municipality of Rome representatives stressed the lack of a training module on the language and culture of the hosting country as a weak point in the project management.

(...) besides providing a theoretical training on civilian service aspects, it would have been recommendable to introduce a structured training action so as to teach the volunteers the culture of the foreign country where they will perform their service. The lack of language training was another weak point. As no language course was contemplated before the stay abroad, some volunteers had integration problems because they could not speak the language of the country where they were performing their service (...).

The female volunteers were employed in two distinct projects concerning:

- summer activities at recreational centres for disabled pupils completing their compulsory education, and home-to-school escorting for handicapped students attending high school;
- activities at the time bank counters.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS DERIVING FROM EXPERIMENTATION

The young women's general assessment about the experience both in Italy and abroad was very positive, especially in terms of their personal growth.

On the contrary, there were some management difficulties as regards the female volunteers employed in schools:

(...) they all had particular personal conditions, so it was not easy to coordinate and lead them. On several occasions they came up against the operators in charge giving rise to unpleasant situations, maybe due to their lack of experience in establishing mature relationships. However, to strike a blow for the volunteers it must be said that the school responsible persons often assigned them any kind of tasks, rather than employing them as an additional resource. This obviously led to some friction (...).

The tasks the volunteers were asked to perform were often heavy, especially on a human level. This would require strong support and assistance by the operators. Therefore, it is important to better understand not only the volunteers' expectations and skills, but also the interest and motivations of the organizations hosting the young women.

The initiative responsible persons did not mention any problem during the project implementation, apart from the aforesaid management problems with the volunteers:

(...) in terms of its organization the project presents some structural problems mostly due to its experimental, thus not fully predictable nature. If repeating the same experience it would be desirable to change the times of the activities: for continuity and fluidity purposes the three-month service abroad should be postponed to the end of the service in Italy. Indeed, once they were back in Italy some of the young women did not feel they could go back to the schools in Rome, because their motivation had decreased. Despite some problems the young women completed the experience enthusiastically (...)

The assessment underlined the following elements:

- it is necessary to consider the impact of choosing to locate the three-month service abroad in the middle of the service: once they were back in Italy, some of the young women lost their interest in keeping up the service;
- the volunteers' employment areas selection shall assess each time the volunteers' availability to perform heavy tasks from both the human and the professional points of view case by case.

D) MUNICIPALITY OF PADUA

PROJECT START-UP / END DATE:	MARCH 1999 – JANUARY 2000
NO. OF SELECTED YOUNG WOMEN:	7
NO. OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO COMPLETED THE CIVILIAN SERVICE:	5 (5 performed the *European Voluntary Service)*

HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

The female civilian service project first aroused the interest of the Municipality of Padua in Venice in May 1998, on the occasion of a conference on young people.

(...) since we heard about this initiative in Venice we were extremely impressed. We immediately got in touch with the Municipalities involved in the project, especially Rome, Bologna and Turin in order to have more detailed information on how to implement the activities locally (...).

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

With a town council resolution, the Municipality of Padua agreed to the experimentation started by the Department for Social Affairs in September 1998. However, the project started in March 1999. The project was advertised by a public call to tender and it was directed to 10 young women who had to be between 18 and 25 years of age by the call-to-tender expiry date, with Italian citizenship and a diploma or curriculum providing evidence of experience acquired in the social-cultural or psychological and charitable fields. In order to regulate the female civilian service, whenever possible the Municipality applied the Male Community Service management regulation.

Other communicative tools to advertise the initiative other than the call to tender were:

- commercials on local radio networks;
- distribution of informational material in youth aggregation places (such as universities and youth centre counters).

The call to tender reported three competence sectors of the projects, i.e.:

- educational support to minors risking social exclusion;
- actions to develop youth self-promotion;
- nomads project.

SELECTION

The Municipality of Padua received 20 applications. Therefore, in consideration of the available vacancies, it was necessary to make a selection (as expressly specified in the call to tender). T

this interview was to understand the young women's motivations, explaining that it was neither a job nor an experience that would have been considered as preferential in case of

recruitment and/or public competitions within the Municipality of Padua:

(...) the selection was particularly rigid on motivational aspects, rather than on qualifications. This aspect determined the exclusion of many young women who did not show any special interest in the initiative. The motivational element also determined the constitution of a highly educated group, even though this was not a prerequisite to be admitted to the selection (...).

Seven young women passed the selection. Two of these left nearly immediately, because they were worried about the three-month stay abroad. A third girl left the service after finding a job. The project responsible person assumes that the causes for this abandonment are due to the participants' family influence:

(...) The families had a strong impact on the two young women's decision to leave the service. They believed that their daughters' studies were not compatible with the civilian service performed in Italy and abroad (...).

The activities began in March 1999 and the volunteers' employment projects were drawn up together with the responsible persons for the sectors that had mostly stimulated the young women's interests:

(...) as the activity required a certain amount of dedication and time flexibility by the young women, we thought it would have been useful to discuss a working plan with the young women themselves, so as to make them aware of their responsibilities from the very beginning (...).

This definitely represented an added value for the project.

CONTENTS AND QUALITY OF TRAINING DIRECTED TO THE VOLUNTEERS

Training was provided over the whole period and it was structured into two distinct times. The training course proposed to the young women coincided with the course established for the conscientious objectors only during the first project implementation phase:

• *Education to peace:*
- Democracy
- Conscientious objection and civilian disobedience in a democratic society
- Non-violent personality
- Gandhi's and Capitini's non-violence messages

• *Civic training:*
- Municipality organization. Services. Public Administration reform
- The Community Service National Council. The problem of in-service objectors' representation
- Regulation on conscientious objectors in civilian service

• *Social-charitable service training:*
- Disadvantage and exclusion. Community service as an experience of proximity to others.
- Help relationship

- Social service network
- Community service, voluntary and social-charitable work
- Deficiency, disability and handicap. Motory and sensory disability
- First aid notions. First aid practice

During the second phase, which was realized in anticipation of the volunteers' European Voluntary Service, training contemplated the acquisition of knowledge on the following themes

- *Presentation of the EVS programme, organizational and management aspects;*
- *Intercultural training*
- *Voluntary work ethics*

(...) During the first part of training we analysed the civilian service in terms of what it is and what you can expect from it; subsequently we trained the volunteers on what they were actually about to do (...).

Language training was provided individually to one volunteer. The other young women already had a good knowledge of the language of the country where they would have performed their service.

(...) The experience abroad was also presented as an opportunity to acquire or improve the knowledge of a foreign language. In order to facilitate the impact of this stay abroad in a European country and to favour the young women's integration into the hosting culture, we planned a training module to foster the knowledge of customs and traditions of the country of destination (...).

The young women's assessment on the activity performed within the various projects was definitely positive. One volunteer working in the nomads project was employed in the AISP, an association cooperating with the Municipality in the provision of services for nomads. From the beginning the girl has received training on these people's life and this allowed her to join the operators association. Specifically, she had to follow the children's work and monitor their education progress, and to establish relationships with the families.
Another volunteer was employed at the youth information counter, where she had to specifically take care of the European voluntary work and intercultural relationships.
In this respect the volunteer said:

(...) I have worked together with the objectors. In particular, I have carried on the work done last year by one of them. There were only the organizer and myself in the service: besides the organizer, I think there is need for another person who is aware of the work, so that this role is not assigned to a new volunteer every year with all the initial difficulties that you can figure out (...).

Another volunteer was employed in the "Exiter" project. She had no problems whatsoever during the service but she complained about a certain divergence, in her opinion, between the service performed in Italy and the one performed abroad:

(...) In Great Britain I worked in a pet shop that collected funds for a kennels, whereas in Italy I did something completely different. I have never loved animals too much and this caused some integration problems at the beginning. But now I can say I enjoyed working there and I would definitely repeat this experience. Moreover, in favour of the persons in charge of the project I must say that we had been informed before leaving about the possibility of having completely different duties abroad with respect to the service in Italy (...).

CRITICAL ELEMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS DERIVING FROM EXPERIMENTATION

As in the case of any new experience the project responsible persons were faced with matters related to the lack of previous knowledge:

> *(...) in spite of the dedication we showed to select the young women, some of them have nonetheless left after we had been working for three months on projects which were useful to them and to us. In the future we intend to stipulate a sort of contract between the volunteers and the Municipality, so as to give this initiative the serious commitment it deserves.(...).*
> *(...) During the meetings held at the DSA with other Municipalities a fair emphasis was given to the various positive aspects of the project. However, some element of uncertainty should have been discussed in detail, so as to allow us to get even more satisfactory results at the end of this experience. (...).*
> *(...) In fact, considering the matter from the perspective of a local authority on the one hand and that of an expert on young people on the other hand, I think that this experience should not be so strictly bound to such constrained time limits, because you need more time to get results from young people aged 18 to 20. Moreover, it is essential to establish wider criteria to access this programme, because despite what the European Union asserts, the young women who can access this initiative need a family who can financially support them both in Italy and abroad (their daily allowance under 5,000 Italian Lire is absolutely symbolic, especially considering that these young women are required for a constant and full-time engagement). In my opinion, the certificates issued to the volunteers should be given higher professional recognition (as in the case of conscientious objectors) (...).*

According to the interviewee this project intends to be a training experience and opportunity for the young women who accessed it, as well as an experience of civil reflection based on the idea that associationism is not the only possible way to work in the voluntary service. In different forms and with different logics, public authorities could become another possible way of operating as volunteers.

E) MUNICIPALITY OF CORI

PROJECT START-UP / END DATE:	NOVEMBER 1999 – MARCH 2000 SEPTEMBER 2000 – JANUARY 2001
NO. OF SELECTED YOUNG WOMEN:	7
NO. OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO COMPLETED THE CIVILIAN SERVICE:	6 (1 performed the *European Voluntary Service*)

HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

The "Civilian service young women" project of the Municipality of Cori begins within the DSA initiative and conforms to the project carried out by the Municipality of Bologna; indeed, the initiative arrangement and design were realized thanks to the Municipality of Bologna.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Before defining the initiative guidelines, the project responsible persons decided to interview some of the young women from Bologna who had taken part in the initiative in their own municipality. The project was only adopted later in the Municipality of Cori and it was obviously adapted to local issues and needs:

> *(...) in consideration of the innovating nature of female civilian service, we decided to ask the young women from Bologna for their opinion, so as to understand what they meant by voluntary work and what they expected from this kind of initiative (...).*

One of the changes that were introduced with regard to the experience in Bologna was the involvement of various municipal sectors in the project, by extending the initiative to other local administration areas:

> *(...) for a successful initiative it is very important to understand and comply with the selected young women's vocations without our taking the responsibility of choosing an employment area for them (...).*

Besides the call to tender, the project was widely advertised through local newspapers, so as to disseminate the news as much as possible. Many neighbouring municipalities showed a deep interest in the project.

The call to tender was published in April 1999 and initially it was addressed to three young women only. However, the local consent given to the initiative encouraged to extend the selection to 10 young female volunteers.

SELECTION

The selection took place in September 1999 through individual interviews. Seven out of the 10 young women who applied passed the selection and were included in the project.

> *(...) we decided to include all the young women who had passed the selection because of the strong motivation for the initiative they had shown during the interviews. The first three volunteers started to work in November, the remaining four started later in March. Only one girl abandoned the project because she could not reconcile work with her studies (...).*

The selected young women were employed in several operating areas, such as the library, the youth information counter and the social services. After the opening of the town archaeological museum the young women were also employed in the new structure with reception and escorting duties.

CONTENTS AND QUALITY OF TRAINING DIRECTED TO THE VOLUNTEERS

As regards the training course provided to the young women, the interviewee specified that they were not trained traditionally, they were rather taught general notions on the type of service they would have performed.

(...) We designed a non-traditional on-site training. We did not contemplate any common training lessons. We preferred to explain to them what they had to do and how at the time of their actual employment. Therefore, we provided the young women with a technical training, rather than theoretical, but none the less effective for this and from the very beginning they have shown a great sense of responsibility and maturity in carrying out their duties (...).

Some young women have operated in more than one service at the Municipality of Cori without a constant work commitment, and they were trained each time by the service responsible persons.
The volunteers included in the project said they were satisfied with their employment, even though there had been initial settling-down problems.

(...) I am aware that office administrative work is rather complex, this is why long practice is needed to eventually obtain a correct final work. However, the young women understood the importance of the service they were performing and they did it with conscientiousness and responsibility. This attests the good level of training they have reached (...).

LOCAL PARTICIPATION: QUALITY OF THE ACTIVATED NETWORK.

This project aroused a deep interest in town both by the young women and the Public Administrations and Associations that hosted the young women.
The initiative was not as successful in the neighbouring municipalities. The project responsible persons believe this may depend on the delayed definition of the project that caused them to miss the opportunity of a period of training abroad:

(...) We intend to publish other calls to tender in the future, even though there is still much to do to make this a constructive initiative. We are still in an experimentation phase and we still need to examine and improve several aspects (...).

CRITICAL ELEMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS DERIVING FROM EXPERIMENTATION

The initiative responsible persons did not report any problem during the project's implementation, because they have been long operating in youth development and employment programmes:

(...) We have always been in touch with young people and this had a positive influence on everybody's work as well as on all the activities we performed during this course, which was certainly new to us but not completely unknown (...).

The assessment results showed that setting the project in a smaller-sized reality may increase the initiative impact and success. During a second phase it may thus be possible to increase the presence of municipalities with a limited number of inhabitants.

F) MUNICIPALITY OF MANTUA

PROJECT START-UP / END DATE:	JANUARY 2000 – APRIL 2001
NO. OF SELECTED YOUNG WOMEN:	5
NO. OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO COMPLETED THE CIVILIAN SERVICE:	5, none of whom performed the *European Voluntary Service (the Municipality started the project only when the deadline for participating in the initiative had already expired)*

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The "Civilian service young women" project begins thanks to the municipal administration's wish to offer young women an opportunity to perform a professionally and humanely rewarding activity in the social field.

The works to draw up the project started in autumn 1999, whereas the activities operatively started in January/March 2000 with the call-to-tender publication.

The project was addressed to 5 young women between 19 and 27 years of age.

The design phase was realized by the municipal administration in cooperation with a company dealing with services to people and families (Aspef S.p.A.).

Several communicative tools were used to advertise the initiative:

- commercials on local TV networks;
- commercials on the most popular local radio networks with a young audience;
- advertisements in local press;
- distribution of informational material in main youth aggregation places (such as libraries, youth centre counters, discotheques, etc.);
- sending of informational material to about 1800 young women possessing the necessary requisites as prescribed in the call to tender.

The project was advertised as much as possible so as to involve in the initiative a large number of young women showing motivation and awareness about the project's contents and procedures.

The cooperation with Aspef suggested the idea of extending the initiative to other 5 young women who would have performed their activity directly at the company; but since only 5 young women responded to the project, the above hypothesis was not put into practice (this was the only negative aspect of this experience).

The sectors in which the young female volunteers' projects were implemented all belong to the cultural and social field:

- personal service and care (implemented at Aspef in favour of young and elderly people);
- social reintegration activity at the "Women's Reception Centre";
- tourist and cultural promotion (Mantua is part of a circuit of 11 art towns in the Po Valley);
- educational and cultural activities for children in support of the operators working for the "Children's town" project.

SELECTION

The young women's selection was made through individual interviews in May 2000 by a commission composed of the Municipality's top management, an Aspef tutor and a psychologist.

CONTENTS AND QUALITY OF TRAINING DIRECTED TO THE VOLUNTEERS

The training course was structured into two parts: a general part and a specific part.

The general part consisted of a single working day articulated into five modules:

- Individual presentation of participants and their expectations about the project.
- How the project began and brief description of the individual employment projects.
- Community service today. Administrative management of conscientious objectors and female volunteers performing civilian service. Presentation of the employment plan at the Municipality of Mantua.
- The Municipality: its organs, their features and their functions. Service provided by the Municipality.

. Guided tour to all municipal sectors to show their location, staff and type of services provided.

The specific part of the volunteers' training took four weeks and it was provided by the tutors of each individual employment project, i.e.:

Project – PO VALLEY ART TOWN CIRCUIT

Training modules:

- Tasks and functions of the Cultural Council
- Project presentation and meeting with the other participants
- Indications on material collection and classification
- Notions on the Internet
- IT management of mailing lists
- Relationship with the public: cultural fairs and shows.

Project – CHILDREN'S TOWN

Training modules:

- Project presentation and meeting with the other participants
- "Palazzo Te" and its museums
- Preparation of an exhibition
- Restoration
- Notions on the Internet
- Museum management: attendance, exhibitions, personnel
- Teaching project: children and parents together at "Palazzo Te"

Project – "WOMEN'S RECEPTION CENTRE" and "ASPEF"

Training modules:

- Organs and operation of the Special Enterprise
- Brief presentation of the activities

- Assistance to elderly people
- The disabled and their needs
- Youth aggregation centres: what they are and what they are for
- Recreational activity organization for elderly people

The training course proposed to the young women privileged specific training (received directly in the sectors where they were operating), rather than a general training:

(...) The four young women working in the Municipality started their training activity on 1st June 2000; the girl working at Aspef started it later in September. (...)
(...) We privileged a specific training, because we thought it would have been more adequate and useful for them. Nonetheless, we devoted the first working day to a basic training on general themes, such as the Municipality, its organization and its structure or the management and organization of civilian service (leave, ordinary leave, short leave, sick leave; daily allowance, etc.) (...).

As regards the relationships with the objectors:

(...) It was not a solid relationship. Indeed, there are 70 objectors operating in the various municipal sectors and the volunteers who worked at the Municipality actually met them and got in touch with them, but this had not been previously arranged. The girl who worked at Aspef had contacts with objectors, too, but nothing had been prearranged either. These two experiences are similar and share common goals, but they have a substantial difference: for boys it is compulsory, for young women it is a choice. And this divergence emerges clearly in terms of attained results: young women operate more conscientiously than boys (we cannot generalize but it is a fact) (...).

All the volunteers involved in the project took part in the interview and expressed their full satisfaction about the activity they were performing (the project ended in April 2001). Each young woman has illustrated her own project and reported about her own working activity. One volunteer was employed in the children-oriented educational and social project at the "Palazzo Te" museum; her tasks were to organize and realize museum tours addressed to children and to support the Palace keeper in other activities. Another girl was employed in the supporting action to institutional activities and cooperated directly with a municipal manager. One volunteer cooperated with the youth information counter. Another one followed the art town project, which includes Mantua, and whose presidency was taken over this year by the Municipality of Mantua. Finally, the fifth volunteer performed her activity at Aspef caring for and assisting young and elderly people.

LOCAL PARTICIPATION: QUALITY OF THE ACTIVATED NETWORK.

The initiative aroused a deep interest in the town's economic and social fabric, especially by the administrators of the sectors involved in the project:

(...) The interest shown was so keen that we thought of extending the initiative to Aspef, i.e. one of our joint enterprises. However, the low number of applications caused us to abandon this idea (...).

As regards future developments to be introduced for this project, a possible suggestion could be

to adopt all necessary measures to sensitise public opinion on voluntary work:

(...) A volunteer is a particularly sensitive person who devotes his/her own time to and spends his/her own energies for others (in our specific case, for the town) and does not aim at getting something back in financial terms, but rather in terms of his/her human and professional growth; that is to say, he/she tries to combine public interest and personal usefulness (...).

The Youth policies councillor explains that Mantua agreed to this project, because it represented something more than simply an experience the volunteers could add to their curricula:

(...) The interest in the project was not to offer an experience to be added to the curriculum, but rather a serious on-site training. At the end of the activities the young women received a certificate of attendance reporting not only that they had worked for 10 months at the Municipality of Mantua, but also an analytical indication of the professional skills they had acquired (...).

(...) Mantua is one of the towns with the largest number of boys who choose civilian service, and for us as a public authority they are an essential resource. Equally essential is the young women's work. In case this experience should not be repeated in the future, public bodies like ours or voluntary organizations would be put in a really difficult position (the work these young people do allows many organizations to survive) (...).

G) PROVINCE OF PARMA– Local Health Authority and Social Services Department

PROJECT START-UP/ END DATE:	JUNE 2000 – APRIL 2001
NO. OF SELECTED YOUNG WOMEN:	10
NO. OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE CIVILIAN SERVICE:	7 (6 carried out the European Voluntary Service)

HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

(...) It is an initiative that the Province of Parma strongly desired. In 14 years of experience in the world of voluntary work, the administration realized that young people are not sufficiently motivated and that it does not take much to awaken their interest. One frequently hears of the decline in the voluntary vocation, especially among the new generations. We are prepared to demonstrate, if still required, that young people are not as superficial and individualistic as easily portrayed and that they are prepared to offer their services to others as long as interesting opportunities are proposed. This initiative is extraordinary as it allows the young women to gain experience in active, real and concrete citizenship (apart from the other slogans) and it can enrich them in not only a personal point of view but at the same time on a professional level that can be "resold" in the labour market (...).

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project, advertised through public call for tender addressed to 10 young women between 18 and 27 domiciled and/or resident in the Province of Parma:

(...) We tried to favour the local residents that coinsides to 100% with the town of Parma. We would like to reach in the next call for tender, the objective of involving also the young women of the territory of the province as well as voluntary work associations from outside Parma (...).

The call for tender revealed the possibility of realizing an entire 10 month civilian service in Italy or 7 months in Italy and 3 months abroad with the European Voluntary Service (EVS):

(...) From the 10 young women, only 6 were willing to go abroad. In Italy the young women were employed in various activities carried out by the Voluntary Associations of the city to whom we asked their disposition and interest in realising this initiative together (...).

Only the Province of Parma participated in the organization of the initiative, complying however with the projects carried out by the municipality of Bologna:

(...) We asked for their material, dicussed and adapted it to the reality of Parma. The municipalities of Bologna and of Reggio Emilia started with large numbers for a project of 50 and 20 young women respectively. Parma decided to start with a small project for 10 young women. This will be the course we would like to stabilize in order to grow in numbers in the future (...).

With regards then to the realisation of the project, this will be carried out with the support of the

host organisation:

(...) We worked as referee for the Centre of Voluntary Services which was publicity for the Associations. Then there was the direct contact with the associations (...).

SELECTION

The Province of Parma received 30 applications. The selection of the 10 young women carried out through interviews, was performed by a judging commission consisting of the director general, the sector director and a sociologist of the Faculty of Sociology of the University of Parma. At the end of the interview a classification was drawn up.

During the interviews the young women were asked in which area they would like to carry out their activity. Similarly, the Province requested the host organisations to prepare a project for inserting the volunteers in their structures. The purpose was to favour the interests of the young women by avoiding allocation in structures less adapted to satisfy their expectations.

CONTENTS AND QUALITY OF TRAINING DIRECTED TO THE VOLUNTEERS

Concerning the training path of the young women, the Consortium of Social Solidarity of Parma, which is the institution that encompasses all the social cooperatives of Parma, was given the task to provide the volunteers with the necessary skills (it is furthermore the Consortium that has to train the conscientious objectors for the Province). A training of 30 hours was foreseen over the whole period of 10 months:

(...) We did not believe in a training module in bulk that ends eventually in a final control for verifying the learning process, but we preferred to construct a training model that accompanies the young women throughout the whole course (...).

The training path in Italy did not include the teaching of a foreign language, which is given on their arrival in the hosting country.

Concerning relations with the objectors:

(...) there were various moments of contact between the objectors and the volunteers because often their offered service often interacted with that of the objectors, nonetheless there was not a direct involvement between the two figures (...).

LOCAL PARTICIPATION: QUALITY OF THE ACTIVATED NETWORK.

As regards to the Department for Social Affairs, a very positive judgement can be given. The same goes for the collaboration relations with the other organisations that participated in this pilot project:

(...) The exchange of information between the various organisations was excellent. In some cases the immediate exchange of information, for example the formulation of the call for tender, made the design of the project easier, accelerating therefore the starting times for those municipalities who had procedures difficulties (...).

H) MUNICIPALITY OF REGGIO EMILIA

PROJECT START-UP/END DATE:	NOVEMBER 1999 – SEPTEMBER 2000
NO. OF SELECTED YOUNG WOMEN:	10
NO. OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE CIVILIAN SERVICE:	6 (4 carried out the European Voluntary Service)

HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

The project "Young women in civilian service" sprang from the willingness of the municipality to offer the opportunity of working in the civilian service also to young women.
The initiative was achieved inspiring itself on the projects elaborated by participating municipalities in the pilot project. Obviously the project was adapted to the needs of the municipality of Reggio Emilia. In particular, efforts were made to make the project more interesting for the young volunteers:

- 20 working hours per week, against the 36 hours adopted by the other municipalities;
- a daily allowance of 10,000 lire, against the usual allowed rate which is under 6,000 lire per day.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project, advertised through public call for tender, was addressed to 20 young women between 18 and 27 resident in the Province of Reggio Emilia.
The call for tender declared the possibility of realizing a whole 10 month civilian service in Italy or 7 months in Italy and 3 months abroad with the European Voluntary Service (EVS).
In Italy the initiative took root in the commitment of the volunteers working in the municipality of Reggio Emilia in the sector of equal opportunities and schools.
The project was widely advertised in order to disseminate the initiative among young people and to clearly explain the contents and procedures of the project.

*SELECTION_*

The selection was carried out through individual interviews. The purpose of the interview was to verify the motivations of the young women. Nevertheless only 10 of the 20 volunteers initially determined from the call for tender were introduced to the civilian service and 6 completed the project course.
The causes of the renunciation do not emanate from the nature or management of the initiative, but from personal and professional motivations.

CONTENTS AND QUALITY OF TRAINING DIRECTED TO THE VOLUNTEERS

The training path proposed to the young women materialized in a short period of common training and in a second phase, a broader preparation on site given individually.

At the end of the training period, the young women were asked to fill out a questionnaire allowing them the chance to express their opinion after the achieved preparation. The volunteers generally expressed a positive opinion, doubts however emerged concerning the coherence of the given training and the duties carried out during the civilian service, especially in the EVS initiative.

As regards to the possibility of working 3 months abroad with the European Voluntary Service, only 4 accepted this proposal. The training course in Italy did not include a foreign language, which was given on the arrival in the host country for the first two weeks.

The experience abroad was definitely positive for the young women as it gave them the chance to live, and not merely travel, in a foreign country and to be immersed in a different reality and finally the fact of having learned a foreign language. Nonetheless, from a strictly working point of view, better clearness and information is required on the insertion projects in order to create better continuity between the activity carried out in Italy and the activity abroad.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS DERIVING FROM EXPERIMENTATION

The realisation of the initiative did not bring any major organisational problems:

> *(...) We did not run into major organisational difficulties except the impossibility of defining, together with the host organisation abroad, the best strategy for a perfect placement of the young women (...)*

Even though the experience of Reggio Emilia was overall judged positively, it certainly has to be said that the insertion of the municipality of Reggio Emilia when the project was already in the starting phase caused major difficulties in the management and coordination. Reggio Emilia did not benefit from the meeting in Italy with the host organisations of the EVS. Similarly the municipality was not able to participate in the first formulation and coordination meetings of the project at DSA.

I) PROVINCE OF MASSA CARRARA

PROJECT START-UP/END DATE:	MAY 1999 – MARCH 2000
NO. OF SELECTED YOUNG WOMEN:	6
NO. OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE CIVILIAN SERVICE:	2 (2 carried out the *European Voluntary Service)*

HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

The project "Young women in civilian service" sprang from the willingness of the provincial administration to offer the possibility of gaining a gratifying experience both on personal and professional level also to young women.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project, advertised through public call for tender, addressed to 10 young women between 18 and 27 resident in the Province of Massa Carrara.

The sole Province of Massa Carrara participated in the definition of the project complying only partly with the initiatives carried out by the other local governments.

The project according to the call for tender had been divided into two distinct phases:

- a first training phase, to be given to the volunteers and jointly to the conscientious objectors;
- a second participation phase in the European Voluntary Service (EVS) and the three months stay abroad .

The gained preparation would allow the volunteers to be employed at the end of the project in the Voluntary Associations of the Province of Massa Carrara.

The element that differs from the other local governments, is not to have foreseen the performance of the civilian service in Italy, but rather the training of the young volunteers together with the conscientious objectors. But the encountered difficulties in reconciling the training of the young women with the conscientious objectors determined, in the first instance, the delay at beginning of the training with regards to the scheduled times and consequently the impossibility to respect that stated in the call for tender.

SELECTION

Massa Carrara province received 13 applications. But in reality there was no selection since 3 of the 13 applicants did not have the required age:

> *(...) We accepted a candidate among the 10 selected volunteers despite her age being over the limit. But at the moment of leaving for abroad, the Department for Social Affairs did not admit her for funding due to the rigid age requirements of the European Union and she therefore had to renounce (...).*

From the 10 young women selected for the project, 4 renounced before the beginning of the training module (maybe due to the delay of the training) and 3 at the end of the training course

(of which two for study reasons and one for personal reasons). Of the three remaining young women one girl had to renounce for age reasons, therefore, only two completed the experience abroad:

(...) certainly we can not be satisfied with the obtained results: a project that started with 10 young women and ended only with 2 seemed to us very disappointing. For this reason we decided not to present the initiative any more (...).

CONTENTS AND QUALITY OF TRAINING DIRECTED TO THE VOLUNTEERS

The training course for the young women was carried out by the Training Institute Icra of Florence:

(...) The project planned the volunteers training jointly with that of the conscientious objectors but, as already mentioned, due to the impossibility of reconciling the two training periods, the project was carried out only with the volunteers (...).

As regards the experience abroad, the young women left for France between the end of July and beginning August of 1999:

(...) after some initial difficulties the young women had the possibility of socialising with people of the same age from all over Europe. Under the personal and learning profile of the foreign language (besides French, the young women also had the chance to express themselves in English and German) the experience was undoubtedly positive; strictly under the professional profile, the experience was not as satisfying: the young women were engaged in work sites for building restoration and have, for example, been working in masonry (...).

At the end of the training course the young women have been awarded a certificate:

(...) we issued the young women with a certificate in which all the acquired skills are mentioned; but the European certificate testifying their experience abroad, the issue of which was guaranteed at the moment of our participation in the initiative, had not yet arrived (despite our continuous requests) and this event caused enormous discontent among the volunteers (...).

LOCAL PARTICIPATION: QUALITY OF THE ACTIVATED NETWORK.

The project planned only for the training of the volunteers; a preparation that would allow them at the end of the project to work in the Associations of voluntary work:

(...) Having planned the project in these terms, it was not necessary to involve the Associations of the Province for the success of the project (...).

The major problems emerged in the first phase in the attempt of reconciling the training period of the young women with that of the young men.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS DERIVING FROM EXPERIMENTATION

The Province of Massa Carrara was the only experience not to be considered positive by the promoting organisations. The major problems emerged in the first phase when trying to reconcile

the training course of the young women with that of the young men.
In the attempt to indicate some elements of criticality from the experimentation we must mention:

- the activity timing;
- the credibility of the incentives;
- having to change the nature of the project, by transforming the service phase in Italy in only a training course.

Parte III. Quali-quantitative analysis: The level of satisfaction of the young volunteers, the expected and achieved framework

Introduction

The elaboration and the analysis of the information gathered through the questionnaires given to the young volunteers aimed at two complementary directions having a double purpose:

- on one hand, at verifying the satisfaction level of the young women about various aspects characterizing the pilot initiative, that is to say the selection phase, the teaching programme and field experience;
- on the other hand, at understanding to what extent this experience had influenced the expectations and attitude of the young women towards voluntary work, co-operative life and work.

It is especially interesting to highlight the motivational framework of the young women in order to understand not only their training expectations but also their disposition and preferences towards the type of work or activity they want to carry out.

Of the 97 young women who completed the experimentation, 57 returned the assessment questionnaire and so consequently the analysis is relative to a representative sample of the universe of the young volunteers.

III. 1 A closer look at the young volunteers

The volunteers who participated in the initiative "Young women in civilian service" were between 20 and 27 years old as foreseen in the pilot project. (Tab. 7) The majority of the participants were between 22 and 25 and around 80% of the young women had a diploma of junior high school and high school, only 5 young women obtained a university degree and 4 young women the school-leaving certificate. (Tab. 8)

Tab. 7 – *Young volunteers per age*

Volunteers age		
Age	Total	%
20	4	7,7%
21	6	11,5%
22	11	21,2%
23	9	17,3%
24	5	9,6%
25	9	17,3%
26	5	9,6%
27	2	3,8%
28	1	1,9%
(Empty)		
General total	52	100,0%

In order to identify the real motivations and aptitudes of the volunteers in the realisation of the initiative, it was opportune to ask the young women if and which working experiences they had had before starting their civilian service: 38 young women, around 67% of the young volunteers, (tab. 9) had worked in the past and of these almost half (44%) had been employed in occasional or seasonal work, while 11 young women (28.9%) were working students. (Tab. 10)

Tab. 8 –*Type of diploma/degree*

Degree		
V5	Total	%
Licenza media	4	7,0%
Diploma professionale	2	3,5%
Diploma di scuola media superiore	46	80,7%
Diploma di laurea	5	8,8%
General total	57	100,0%

The table demonstrates that more than 30% of the young women answered "for possible occupational opportunities", 19.6% "for pure interest in the contents" and 14.7% "for helping other people". (Tab. 12)
As far as the working areas interesting for

Tab. 10 – *Job type*

If so, what type of job?		
V12	Totale	%
Employed	8	21,1%
Seasonal	17	44,7%
Working student	11	28,9%
Self-employed	2	5,3%
General Total	38	100,0%

of the involvement in the experimentation of young people coming from a specific social status and having difficulties in entering the job market. In fact, the young women considered the initiative as a perfect opportunity for creating new prospects for their personal and professional growth and for gaining a constructive pre-working experience in the social world.
With regard to the information modalities

At the project start-up, 17 young women (43.6%) had been unemployed for more than two years, 9 young women (23.1%) for about one year and other 9 volunteers (23.1%) had been looking for a job for a period between 6 months and a year. (Tab. 11)
The possible occupational prospects offered by this experience represent the modal frequency regarding the motivations that induced the volunteers to participate in the initiative.

Tab. 9 – *Past working experience*

Did you work in the past		
V11	Totale	%
Yes	38	66,7%
No	19	33,3%
General total	57	100,0%

young women are concerned, 18 young women, i.e. more than 30%, answered that they would like to work in social and welfare services. (Tab. 13)
This data, analysed in an integrated way, allow us to affirm that the pilot project "Young women in civilian service" fully reached one of its main objectives, that

Tab. 11 – *Period of unemployment*

How long have you been un employed?		
V13	Totale	%
Less than 6 months	4	10,3%
More than 6 months and less than one year	9	23,1%
More than 1 year	9	23,1%
More than 2 year	17	43,6%
(Empty)		
General total	38	100,0%

Tab. 12 – *Job expectations*

Why did you decide to take part in this project?		
V17 e V18	Totale	%
Other	1	1,0%
To help other people	15	14,7%
For any possible job	31	30,4%
For educatinal credits	1	1,0%
To leam a new language	12	11,8%
Interest the content	20	19,6%
To find out something about my self	4	3,9%
To be with other people	12	11,8%
A cheap way to be...	6	5,9%
(Empty)		0,0%
General total	102	100,0%

through which the young women learned about the initiative, the press (31.6%) and posters (31.6%) were favoured among the other channels of information. (Tab. 14)

Tab.13 – *Initiative motivations*

In which field would you like to work?		
V14	Totale	%
Publishing	2	3,6%
Handicraft	2	3,6%
Advertising and marketing	10	18,2%
Social service	18	32,7%
Environment	4	7,3%
Art and culture	4	7,3%
Tourism	8	14,5%
Sport and free time	2	3,6%
Police	1	1,8%
Insurance	1	1,8%
Computer science and language	1	1,8%
Other	2	3,6%
(Empty)		
General total	55	100,0%

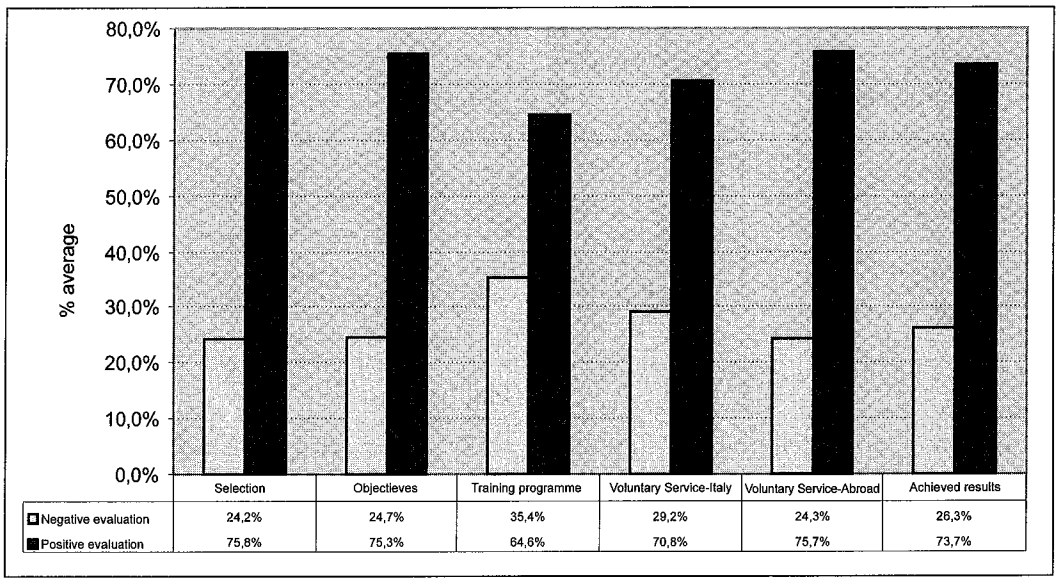
Tab.14 – *Information channels*

How did you learn about this project?		
V15	Totale	%
Press	18	31,6%
Posters	18	31,6%
Friends and acquaintance	8	14,0%
Youth projects	5	8,8%
Internet	1	1,8%
Communication	2	3,5%
Communication of	3	5,3%
Radio	1	1,8%
School/University	1	1,8%
General total	38	100,0%

III. 2 Analysis of the satisfaction level of the volunteers about the selection procedures, received training and initiative objectives

The following chart presents a first general assessment picture of the young women concerning the structural aspects of the initiative; the selection phase, the training programme, the voluntary service carried out in Italy and abroad, expected and achieved results. It shows a comparison of the positive and negative evaluation in form of average percentage derived from the answers "not at all" and "little" (negative assessment) – first column – and "moderate" and "very" (positive assessment) – second column. This chart is the starting point for thoroughly analyzing the elements of discontent, or of particular merit, expressed individually by the young women concerning the initiative. (Chart 1)

Chart 1 – *Assessment comparison*



	Selection	Objectieves	Training programme	Voluntary Service-Italy	Voluntary Service-Abroad	Achieved results
Negative evaluation	24,2%	24,7%	35,4%	29,2%	24,3%	26,3%
Positive evaluation	75,8%	75,3%	64,6%	70,8%	75,7%	73,7%

This chart clearly shows that the opinion of the young women is generally positive, especially concerning the European Voluntary Service (EVS) experience, the reached results towards the expectations and achieved project objectives (with peaks over 75% of the assessment). A less positive assessment was expressed towards the civilian service training attended by the young women who then had to put it into practise.
The following chapters contain a brief description of the opinions expressed by the young volunteers about the structural and procedural aspects of the pilot project.

The selection phase
The selection phase represented the first direct contact with the young women and a true test for the potential volunteers. It also gave local governments the opportunity of promoting and illustrating the general characteristics of the pilot project. It is in this view that

Tab.15 – *Clarity of selection criteria*

Were the selection criteria clear?		
V19	Totale	%
No	2	3,6%
A little	15	27,3%
Enough	30	54,5%
Yes	8	14,5%
(Empty)		
General total	38	100,0%

The question asking for an opinion on the selection committee competence received by the female volunteers a positive opinion (92.8%), while the answers "not at all" and "little" competent received only 7.2%. (Tab. 18)

The project objectives

Regarding the coherence of the individual expectations and objectives of the initiatives

Tab.17 – *Criteria equity and transparency*

Was the selection process fair and transparent in your opinion?		
V22	Totale	%
No	6	11,3%
A little	9	17,0%
Enough	24	45,3%
Yes	14	26,4%
(Empty)		
General total	53	100,0%

firms the good quality and ability of the communication system to diffuse the pilot project. Less positive, on the other hand, was the opinion concerning the continuation or not of the expected coherence with the needs of each volunteer at the moment of the actual realisation of the civilian service. Only 63.0% of the young volunteers the young women were asked to express an opinion on the clearness, effectiveness and equity of the selection method which they underwent for participating in the initiative. Their opinion was very satisfying; around 70% of the young volunteers judged the selection criteria clear (69%) and efficient (69.8%), more than 71% of the young women thought the selection process to be equitable and transparent. (Tab. 15, 16, 17)

Tab.16 – *Efficacy of selection methods*

Were the selection methods effective?		
V20	Totale	%
No	3	5,7%
A little	13	24,5%
Enough	31	58,5%
Yes	6	11,3%
(Empty)		
General total	53	100,0%

around 80% of the young women judged the purpose of the project "moderate" (68.4%) and "very" (19.3%) coherent with the personal expectations. In particular it is pointed out how the purpose of the initiative from the beginning is sufficiently clear. (tab. 19) This further con-

Tab.18 – *Selectors competence*

Did the selectors appear competent?		
V21	Totale	%
No	1	1,8%
A little	3	5,5%
Enough	26	47,3%
Yes	25	45,5%
(Empty)		
General total	55	100,0%

Tab.19 – *Objectives and expectations coherence*

Were the initiative objectives coherent with your expectations?		
V23	Totale	%
No	2	3,5%
A little	5	8,8%
Enough	39	68,4%
Yes	11	19,3%
General total	57	100,0%

- the non correspondence between the conditions declared in the call for tender and what had been realized;
- the lack of regular monitoring by the local organisations on the project progress;
- the limited continuity and coherence between the training course and the service of volunteer work.

The training programme

The training course attended by the young women in the initiative was the same for all the projects. The proponent organisation had in fact full liberty in deciding and structuring the didactic programme. The formulation and accomplishment of the training course represented a demanding and central moment in the realisation of the project and furthermore a pivot for a fruition of the initiative. This was widely discussed during the various focus groups between the young women and the institutions in the attempt to enrich the didactic course with effective contents and coherent with the civilian service carried out. It is also an effort to acknowledge the acquired familiarity and skills as training credits during this efficient period of voluntary work.

Tab. 21 – *Clearness of the teaching programme*

Was the received training clearly desceribed at the beginning of the project?		
V25	Totale	%
No	6	11,3%
A little	12	22,6%
Enough	24	45,3%
Yes	11	20,8%
(Empty		
General total	53	100,0%

In order to monitor the training quality and structure, it was asked if the didactic programme at the beginning of the activity had been explained clearly; 66.1% of the young women answered affirmative ("moderate" 45.3% and "very" 20.8%) (Tab. 21) while declared that the reached objectives maintained "moderate" (51.9%) and "very" (11.1%) the expected coherence with the individual needs once moved on to the concrete realisation of the service, while more than 36% valuated the correspondence "little" (25.9%) or "not at all" (11.1%) present. (Tab. 20) This fact underlines the discontent in the group of the young volunteers who sometimes complained about:

Tab.20 – *Expected and real coherence*

Were the initial objectives coherent with your needs?		
V24	Totale	%
No	6	11,1%
A little	14	25,9%
Enough	28	51,9%
Yes	6	11,1%
(Empty)		
General total	54	100,0%

Tab.22 – *Efficacy of the received training*

Was the training satisfactory?		
V26	Totale	%
No	7	13,0%
A little	10	18,5%
Enough	25	46,3%
Yes	12	22,2%
(Empty)		0,0%
General total	54	100,0%

33.9% expressed a negative opinion ("not at all" 11.3% and "little" 22.6%). On the whole, the received training was judged satisfying by about 70% of the volunteers ("moderate" 46.3% and "very" 22.2%), "little" (18.5%) and "not at all" (13%) satisfying by 31.5% of the volunteers. (Tab. 22)

The didactic programme was coherent with the individual expectations for 68.6% of the young women, but in the progress of the training the answers of the young women demonstrated a substantial "*deterioration*" of the expected coherence. The 59.2% of the young women had in fact assessed the didactic programmes corresponding to their expectations while 41.5% expressed an opinion of substantial incoherence ("not at all" coherent 14.8% and "little" coherent 25.9%). (Tab. 23)

Tab.23 – *Coherence with the initial objectives.*

During its execution was the teaching programme coherent with your needs?		
V30	Totale	%
No	8	14,8%
A little	14	25,9%
Enough	26	48,1%
Yes	6	11,1%
(Empty)		
General total	54	100,0%

The voluntary work service carried out in Italy

The pilot project covered, apart from a civilian service to be carried out in Italy, also the possibility to fulfil a three months experience abroad with the European Voluntary Service (EVS). It is an opportunity that could have been taken advantage of by the young women in the ten month period planned by the call for tender. The same local governments had the freedom to participate or not in the initiative abroad and for several organisations who had joined successively, it was impossible to consider this freedom for mandatory conditions fixed by the EVS programme. It is important to separately highlight the two experiences so as to extract valid information about the fulfilled tasks in one and the other activity, the intervention field, but most of all, to understand the usefulness of the double experience, operating differently under multiple aspects.

Tab. 24 – *Coherence of the service with the content and the objectives of the porject*

Did you find the carried out sevice coherent with the objectives of the project?		
V32	Totale	%
No	4	7,1%
A little	10	17,9%
Enough	28	50,0%
Yes	14	25,0%
(Empty)		
General total	56	100,0%

The young women worked in various intervention areas during the service in Italy: welfare, youth and citizens services, cultur-

Tab. 25 – *Service carried out according to the expectations*

Coherent with the contents of the training		
V35	Totale	%
No	8	14,3%
A little	21	37,5%
Enough	20	35,7%
Yes	7	12,5%
(Empty)		
General total	56	100,0%

50% of the young women expressed an opinion "little" (35.7%) and "not at all" (12.5%) beneficial. (Tab. 25)
The percentage of the young women who expressed disappointment towards the coherence of the service is certainly not insignificant, and in this respect it seems wise to plan an activity that finds the right balance between organisational needs and the capacities and aptitudes of the young volunteers.
In several occasions, some young women complained about a certain management disorganisation of their voluntary work activity. This underlined the necessity to appoint a coordinator able to guide and assist the young women in the various phases of the pilot project.

Tab.27 – *Duties assigned to the girls*

Who followed the duties you performed before?		
V33	Totale	%
Paid personnel	13	22,8%
Volunteer personned	6	10,5%
Conscientions objector	21	36,8%
Nobody	17	29,8%
General total	57	100,0%

al promotion and protection of the cultural and environmental heritage with tasks of a technical-operative nature.
When asking an opinion about the coherence of the fulfilled service regarding the contents and objectives of the project, 75% of the young women expressed an affirmative judgment while 25% judged it "not at all" (7.1%) and "little" (17.9%) coherent. (Tab. 24) Less positive was the evaluation on the coherence of the civilian service regarding the contents of the training course attended by the young volunteers: about

Tab.26 – *Coherence of the service with the training*

Did the carried out service reflect your expectations		
V34	Totale	%
No	3	5,3%
A little	16	28,1%
Enough	24	42,1%
Yes	14	24,6%
General total	57	100,0%

As regards to the individual expectations, the opinion is less hostile: 66.7% of the young women declared that the fulfilled service reflected "moderate" (42.1%) and "very" (24.6%) their expectations, 33.4% have given a negative opinion. (Tab. 26)
The young volunteers were asked if the tasks they had been assigned to were previously executed by other subjects. In most of the cases the young women answered that the tasks were first executed by a conscientious objector (36.8%), while 29.8% of the young women explained that nobody before them executed their appointed tasks. (Tab. 27)

Tab.28 – *If you were asked to assess the service carried in Italy, how would you judge it?*

Gratifying		
V37	Totale	%
A lot	24	43,6%
Enough	20	36,4%
A little	6	10,9%
Not at all	5	9,1%
(Empty)		
General total	55	100,0%

Good for my aptitudes		
V36	Totale	%
A lot	24	42,9%
Enough	21	37,5%
A little	8	14,3%
Not at all	3	5,4%
(Empty)		
General total	56	100,0%

The percentage of the young women whose tasks were previously carried out by remunerated personnel is very high (22.8%). This fact is very delicate since it highlights once again the necessity to focus on the employment of the volunteers in the civilian service, which should anticipate the non substitution of the remunerated figure but rather the complement and assistance for the host organisation.
When expressing a general opinion about the service fulfilled in Italy, 80% of the young women evaluated it as "very" (43.6%) and "moderate" (36.4%) gratifying and "very" (42.9%) and "moderate" (37.5%) suitable to their individual aptitudes. (Tab. 28)

The voluntary work service abroad – the EVS experience
The young women who took part in the experience of the EVS all manifested a great enthusisam for the initiative both at the moment of their departure and on their return, so much so that several young women upon completion of the project in Italy, decided to leave again for a new EVS experience.
The volunteers were asked to make a general evaluation of the voluntary work service abroad, the judgement was very positive regarding the personal and professional gratification: 66.7% declared it to be "very" rewarding, 23.8% "moderate" rewarding, more than 90% of the young women furthermore assessed it "very" (45.2%) and "moderate" (47.6%) suitable to their individual aptitudes.

Tab.29 – *If you had to assess the service carried out abroad, how would you judge it?*

Gratifying		
V41	Totale	%
A lot	28	66,7%
Enough	10	23,8%
A little	3	7,1%
Not at all	1	2,4%
(Empty)		
General total	42	100,0%

Good for my apitudes		
V40	Totale	%
A lot	19	45,2%
Enough	20	47,6%
A little	1	2,4%
Not at all	2	4,8%
(Empty)		
General total	42	100,0%

Coherent with the content of the training		
V39	Totale	%
A lot	6	14,6%
Enough	12	29,3%
A little	14	34,1%
Not at all	9	22,0%
(Empty)		
General total	41	100,0%

It seems from the data of the table that the initiative positively influenced the cultural development of the young women (37.2%) and their occupational prospects (23.4%). This results in perfect harmony with the motivations that lead the young women to participate in the pilot project. In fact, 30% of the young women partici-

As regards to the coherence of the contents of the training the opinion seems rather polarized: 43.9% of the young women declared the contents of the training "very" (14.6%) and "moderate" (29.3%) coherent with the carried out service, while the rest 56.1% considered the contents "little" (34.1%) and "not at all" (22%) coherent. (Tab. 29)
Elements of criticality emerged regarding the manner in which the young women fulfilled their voluntary work service abroad that in 90% of the cases did not correspond to the received training and the fulfilled tasks in Italy. (Tab. 30)

The frame of the expected and achieved results

In order to assess the initiative's capacity of helping on the individual skills level, the young women have been asked if they had gained useful skills in various domains during the project.
When asking the young volunteers to draw up a preference list of their initial expectations regarding this experience, the tables demonstrate quite a uniform distribution with maximum and minimum preferences of expectations of "*reinforcing and developing one's personal culture*" and the expectation of "*acquiring skills applicable in the job market*". (Tab. 31)

Tab.30 – *SVE Execution Made*

Was the sevice abroad carried out with the same mode as the are in Italy		
V38	Totale	%
Yes	4	9,8%
No	37	90,2%
(Empty)		
General total	41	100,0%

pated "*for eventual occupational opportunities*" and 19.6% "*for pure interest in the contents*". (Tab. 32)

Tab.31 – *Direct results of the testing*
(make a preference rating, indicating 1 as the most preferred and 5 as the least)

Acquring competences to be "spent" on the market		
Preference rating - indicating 1 as the most preferred and 5 as the least	Total	%
1	15	26,3%
2	5	8,8%
3	7	12,3%
4	7	12,3%
5	**23**	**40,4%**
General total	57	100,0%

Consolidate and optimize my personal culture		
Preference rating - indicating 1 as the most preferred and 5 as the least	Total	%
1	**15**	**26,3%**
2	17	29,8%
3	14	24,6%
4	10	17,5%
5	1	1,8%
General total	57	100,0%

Developing my personal creativity		
Preference rating - indicating 1 as the most preferred and 5 as the least	Total	%
1	5	8,8%
2	17	29,8%
3	16	28,1%
4	16	28,1%
5	3	5,3%
General total	57	100,0%

Widening my social relation range		
Preference rating - indicating 1 as the most preferred and 5 as the least	Total	%
1	8	14,0%
2	10	17,5%
3	20	35,1%
4	13	22,8%
5	6	10,5%
General total	57	100,0%

An important opportunity to modify my life status		
Preference rating - indicating 1 as the most preferred and 5 as the least	Total	%
1	**15**	**26,3%**
2	7	12,3%
3	13	22,8%
4	11	19,3%
5	11	19,3%
General total	57	100,0%

In order to verify if the expectations had been satisfied once the project finished, the young women were asked to express a general opinion on the achieved results: 54.4% of the young women considered it "very" (22.8%) and "moderate" (31.6%) satisfying to their gained skills, 84.2% thought the strengthening and development of their personal culture to be "very" (35.1%) and "moderate" (49.1%) improved. Also the percentage is high of the young women who saw a certain growth in their personal creativity (68.4%) and who judged "very" (45.6%) and "moderate" (43.9%) the network of the created social relations. 71.9% of the young women finally assessed this experience a "very" (33.3%) and "moderate" (38.6%) important occasion to change their living conditions. (Tab. 33)

Tab.32 – *Which were your initial expectations in this experience?*

Generally, you think that during the project you have received useful competences for the:		
V42 V43	Totale	%
– Creation of personal networks that will help me	18	19,1%
– Improvement of the abilities to plan my future	16	17,0%
– Cultural growth	35	37,2%
– Working prospects	22	23,4
– Other	3	3,2%
(Empty)		
General total	94	100,0%

Tab. 33 – *Do you consider your expectations satisfied?*

Acquiring competences to be "spent" on the market		
V49	Totale	%
A lot	13	22,8%
Enough	18	31,6%
A little	17	29,8%
Not at all	9	15,8%
General total	57	100,0%

Developing my personal creativity		
V51	Totale	%
A lot	12	21,1%
Enough	27	47,4%
A little	10	17,5%
Not at all	8	14,0%
General total	57	100,0%

Widening my social relation range		
V52	Totale	%
A lot	26	45,6%
Enough	25	43,9%
A little	5	8,8%
Not at all	1	1,8%
General total	57	100,0%

An important opportunity to modify my life status		
V53	Totale	%
A lot	19	33,3%
Enough	22	38,6%
A little	8	14,0%
Not at all	8	14,0%
General total	57	100,0%

PARTE IV – Assessment elements and final considerations

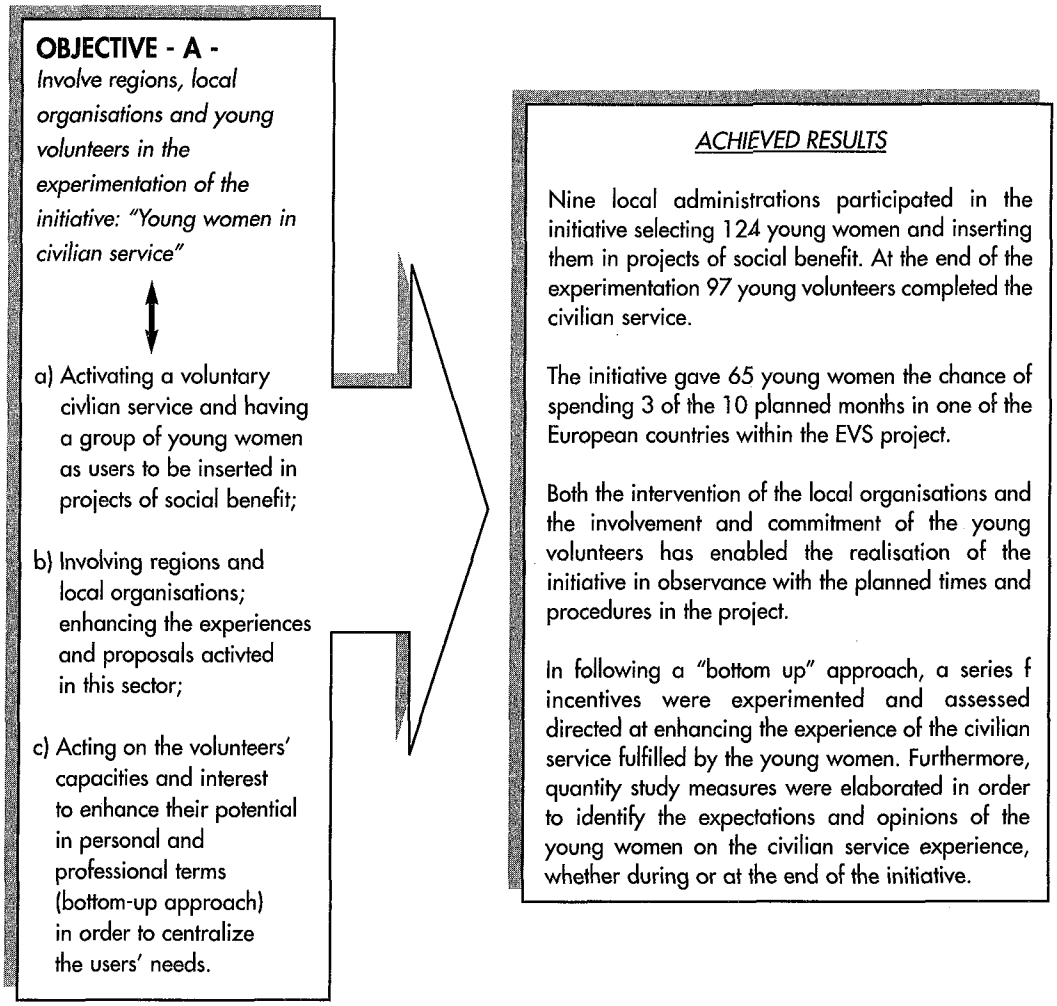
The defined objectives and expected results were evaluated by following parameters:

- effectiveness, analysing the capacity of the local initiatives in reaching the identified objective;
- coherence, observing to what extent the developed actions have been relevant to the instruments, methods and objectives identified during the planning
- correspondence, measuring the initiatives' adaptation to the young volunteers' expectations and needs.

In general terms it is possible to anticipate the success of the initiative, whether regarding the parameters of effectiveness and coherence, or in relation to the correspondence of the project to the volunteers' expectations and needs. The involvement, participation and commitment level of the activated agents and of the young women was very prominent and also the results achieved by the individual local initiatives were very positive. Naturally, elements of criticality emerged and constitute precious information resources in the perspective of expanding and transferring the initiative to broader temporal and territorial contexts and in the light of a future presence of a more substantial number of volunteers in the civilian service.

The anticipatory and innovative character of the project, the validity of the experimented intervention model, its transferable nature and capacity of activating local intervention networks could be brought to attention.

From the analysis of the achieved results and the elements gathered from the initiative assessment, identified factors of criticality regarding the various observation areas were gathered and summarized consecutively in order to suggest the necessary corrections to be set up for enriching and developing the pilot project.



Criticality factors:

1. *Functions of the partnership and coordination of the project "Young women in civilian service"*

- The necessity of a greater partner involvement in the various stages of planning and action.
- The advantage of providing for a convention/agreement between local promoting organisations and local executive organisations in order to make the objectives of the provided service more assessable and the selection criteria and assessment of the volunteers more inter-relational.
- The necessity of a greater awareness of the territorial partners of the project and the objectives of the civilian service.
- The creation of training occasions of the partner subjects on the territory and of the partners that manage the project.

- The forecast of a training course for the manager of the civilian service.
- The necessity of a better timing management.
- The need of introducing a single reference figure to allow for a punctual communication with the various partners.

2. Selection of the young women and the provided service:

- A greater coherence between the selection of the young women and the target group to which the project is directed.
- Provide in the selection procedure, the possibility for the young volunteers to communicate their preferences in vocational area in order to give a better opportunity to carry out a service "in accordance" with their skills and aptitudes, always in obedience to the "bottom up" approach.
- Enhance the capacities and experiences of the young women by appointing them responsibility and tasks that correspond more to their aptitudes and skills. The motivational aspect plays an essential role in the effectiveness of the fulfilled service.
- A greater correspondence of the foreseen conditions in the public call for tender and those verified during the service.
- Eliminate the imbalance between the fulfilled tasks during the service and the initial expectations.

The necessity of adapting the volunteers training to the various projects in which they are included was underlined with reference to the project implementation formalities in the territory: a pre-existent project, and therefore already settled, or a project designed specifically for the volunteers. In the first case, the young women did not encounter particular difficulties of an organisational or logistic nature as they were involved in an ongoing activity. At the same time however, they were confronted with an already organised structure, with defined roles and functions where they could not express their capacities and or fulfil their expectations.
On the other hand, the young women participating in a new project had leeway to greater flexibility and the possibility of "cutting" a role to measure. Nevertheless they have encountered various organisational problems. In these cases the local organisations' task is that of adapting their project to the diverse situations.

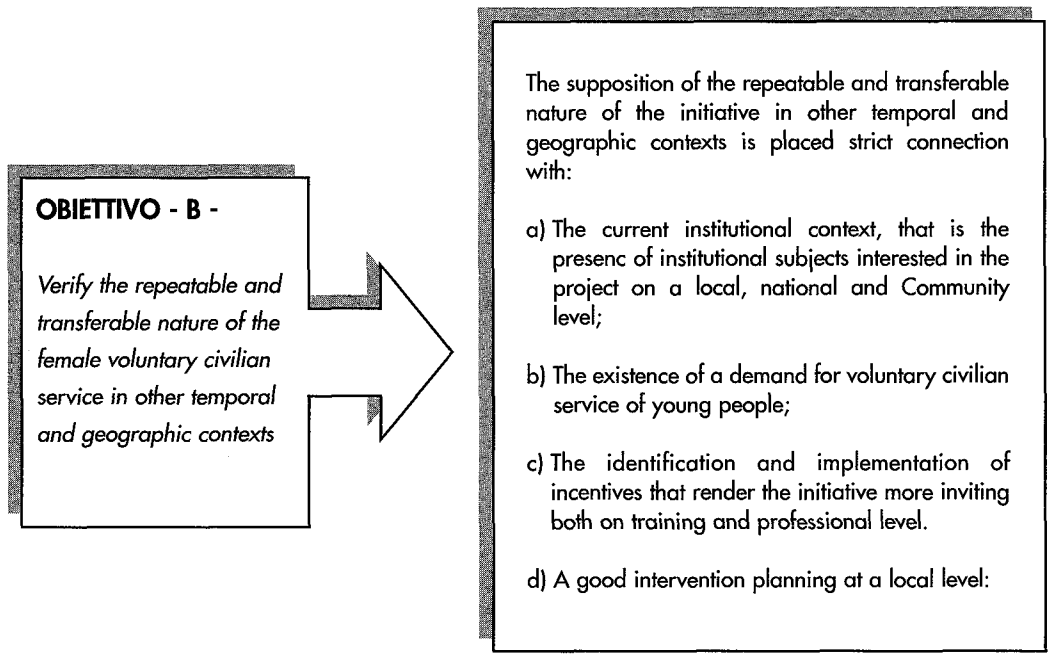
3. Training Course:

Regarding the training received by the young women, the training contents did not always correspond to volunteers' expectations in terms of training requirements.
The research identified that concerning the content, in many cases the training focused on general and context topics and little on contents of the provided civilian service. Regarding methodology, a meagre disposition was demonstrated by the local organisations in the training structure, involving new methods and instruments also of participative nature.
Thus, a more implicit training is recommended both in contents and methods of the assigned service, which can be structured in various areas of interest:

- Context information;
- Relational and motivational module (the voluntary work; the civilian service; the users rights; etc.)

- Technical and professional module relating to the assigned service;
- Linguistic module;
- Module on the service to be provided abroad: information on the European partner, on social-cultural context of the hosting country, on the contents and procedures of the assigned activity.
- Module on the social capital.

From a methodological point of view, the predominance of a traditional teaching in several cases, was due to the fact that the training was carried out by people belonging to the organization thus avoiding the employment of external teachers. This aspect was highlighted by the volunteers who, in several cases, complained about the insufficient training specificity. To satisfy this element it is suggested to turn, to external educators whenever necessary and to provide a coordinator who guides the volunteers during their civilian service. The coordinator should be a person sufficiently trained by the same local structure with duties in information, guidance, orientation and training of the young volunteers. Furthermore, he/she should act as a reference point and interface for the young women both in Italy and abroad.



a) The institutional context

The presence of an institutional context that is favourable to the civilian service represents an essential condition in order to foresee a growth of the initiative, its repeatable and transferable character in other contexts.

On a national level, the recent formulation of the law that constitutes the national voluntary civilian service certainly created the basic regulations for developing analogue initiative throughout the Italian territory.

In particular, the decree law of the Prime Minister of 10th August 2001, determined the contingent of the young people admitted to the civilian service under art.6, paragraph 1, of the law of 6th March 2001 n° 64 and ulterior dispositions relative to the respective juridical and economical treatment. While the National Office of the civilian service published the first call for tender for admitting 396 volunteers in the year 2001– women and recruits unfit for military service – to be employed in the projects of the civilian service. The projects, object of the call for tender, will be realized from 1st December 2001. With successive calls for tender, publicised for reasons of the numbers of places that become available due to the presentation and approval of ulterior projects by the agreed upon organisations, it is possible to proceed to the selection of ulterior volunteers until the maxim concourse of a contingent of 790 units fixed by the Dpcm on 10th August 2001.

b) Possible incentive elements of the initiative

When defining the forecast of the repeatable and transferable nature of the project "Young women in civilian service" an instrumental role is presented by the identification of possible incentive elements of the initiative.

There are probably two categories of incentives to be planned for, those of national and European level that require an institutional regulations frame and those to be activated on territorial level.

As regards to the European incentives frame, three procedures for enhancement of the civilian service experience have been scheduled:

- The awarding of a European certificate for a personal curriculum.
- The possibility of spending three months abroad at the end of the service in Italy, within the Community programme EVS.
- The possibility of presenting a project of "Capital Future" as corollary of the EVS service.

As already mentioned previously, the "Capital Future" is developed both in terms of training and awareness of the young women by providing for orientation and guidance training days so they can become acquainted with the domain of professional development potential offers by the initiative.

The frame of incentives, on the other hand, emerged on a local level, demonstrates a general tendency to favour the recognition of training credits for the gained skills during the civilian service. A similar tentative was made by the municipality of Bologna but fundamentally they did not achieve the anticipated results.

The training credits are the documentation of the experiences acquired beyond the traditional education circuit, such as schools and training centres, but in domains and sectors of the civilian service linked to the training of the individual and human, civil and cultural growth such as those relating in particular to the cultural, artistic and recreational activities, work, environment, voluntary work, solidarity, cooperation and sport.

These credits translated in cumulative hours of training and instruction, represent an attendance relief in comparison to what had been expected for a specific training course.

The credit therefore has to be "certified" by one of the institutions that can guarantee the integration with more advanced levels of training or instruction.



Training credits[4]

"Certifying" a credit means obtaining legal recognition of the possession of an applicable skill for the continuance of a training path.

For the construction of a system of training credit recognition it is necessary that there is:

- Clearness in rules, criteria, indicators on the basis of which training and professional experience acquired or to be acquired;
- Training standards, intended as features and minimum indispensable requirements for the acquisition of the identified skills as objective of the training course to which reference has to be made for:
- a training credit certification
- a training credit validation through the competence portfolio.

On the other hand "Validating" a credit through the competence portfolio means recognizing the skills on a social level and guaranteeing their application in a more closed and identified domain on the basis of protocols mutually defined between the systems.

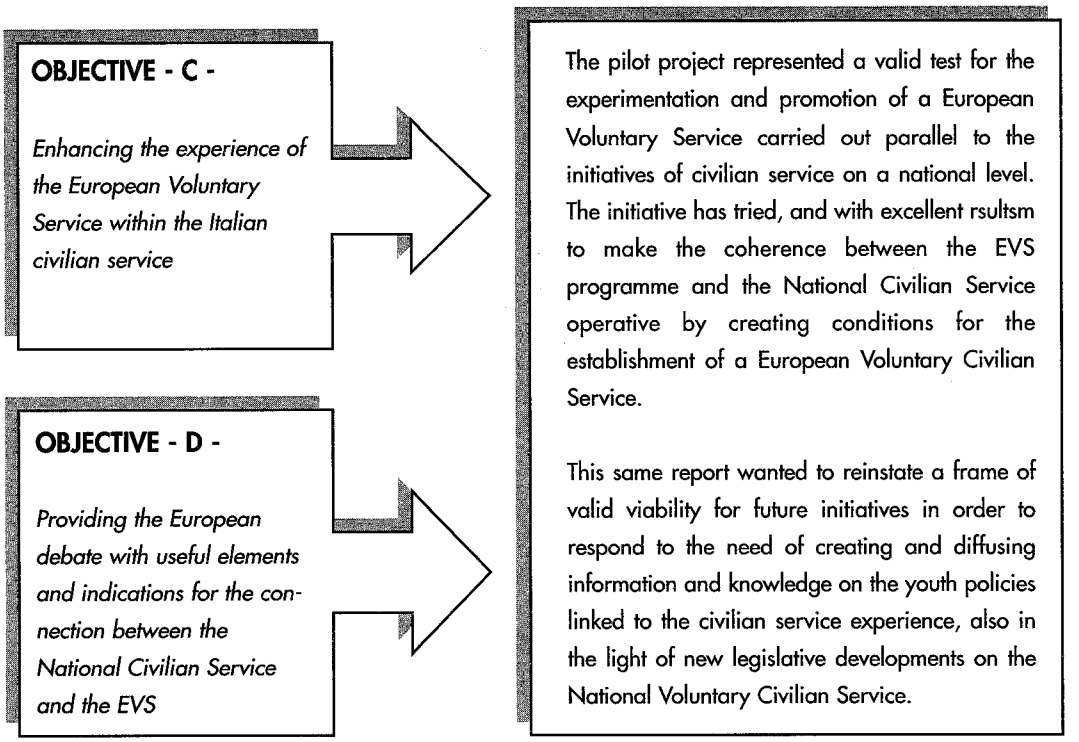
The training credit, as demonstration of the acquired skills by the young volunteers during the training period ad hoc and of their application during the service, constitutes a valid title:

- For insertion in the job market;
- For the re-entry in training;
- For integration with the school system through the Balance of skills;
- For the calculation of allowances during university studies through specific protocols.

It is certain that a valid training course and the recognition of the training credits represent one of the most concrete links between the voluntary service and the job market. This relation should be however strengthened in order to create effective work opportunities within the civilian service experience.

A very evident fact is that the civilian service often acts as an occasion of meeting and acknowledgement between the young people and organisations of the third sector. It also represents a professional incubator for many young people and constitutes an informal way of meeting job offer and demand. It finally plays an advisory role in the potential professional aptitudes of the young people.

[4] The text has been taken from the report "Per un modello di Servizio Civile" by the regional Council of social policies – Region Emilia Romania (2000)



The pilot project assessment allowed the collection of a series of information useful for the reinforcement of the project devices and for the promotion of the volunteers presence in the civilian service. In particular:

- The dimension of the training has to take into account both the motivational and "professional" aspects. The volunteers in the civilian service should be aware of the value and ethical dimension of the work, of which also the acquisition of specific skills take part that will be useful in the future investment of looking for work, in a better execution of the service in obedience to the rights of the users. Besides a traditional training adequate space is given to the enhancement of the potential skills of the volunteers and their aptitudes that can be developed and in future applied in the occupational field.
- The development of the national and local incentives is a matter that has still to be articulated on the institutional side and could be worth a specific in depth study. It is also linked to the issue of the diffusion of a responsible citizenship, of a territorial fabric inclined, on the whole, to strengthen the volunteers' presence in the civilian service. The pilot project could not draft a synthesis on the matter of incentives, but was able to highlight the proposals of local authorities and the national demand.
- The interviews with the young women have been a forum for their expectations and goals concerning the service and for the criticism that, in some cases, undermined their motivation. A feature, often underlined, concerns what can be defined as "trust" between the

organization offering the service and the would be volunteer. In the consolidation stage, particular attention must be paid to the correspondence between the public notice elements – terms, work conditions, service rendered, incentives, etc.- and concrete set up of the service. The reliability of the proposal made to the civilian service female volunteers depends on this. As for "tasks" and "functions", the boundaries of the volunteer role must be outlined with special care to help the young woman in civilian service to test herself in a frame of shared rules. Some elements rendered the trial project particularly complex both in its management and in its evaluation. Especially:

- The geographic decentralization of the project divided among nine different towns;
- The municipality partnership with subjects of the third sector, organizations and women's associations;
- The participation of four host organizations distributed in several European countries;
- The simultaneous presence of a community and national project dimension together with a local one;
- The lack of real data on the entity of the real demand for civilian service by young women;

The interest for this pilot project shown by the young volunteers and by the involved parts, is mostly due to the fact that the civilian service is a precious occasion to widen horizons and test new professional and learning opportunities. A well "organized" civilian service having activities of consistent content can be an opportunity for field training, destined to be a positive influence on employment insertion, or in any case, will stand out on the young people's curriculum vitae. Testing school knowledge, learning to communicate and to organize animation activities and to build positive relationships with minors, the disabled and senior citizens, are all valid contributions for the entry of young people into the work force. And after all, the desire of many young men and women of approaching the volunteer world can be a good opportunity to test new active paths of citizenship that can bring young people closer to strong values such as social responsibility, solidarity and equal opportunities

Legislative References:

- LAW July 8, 1998, No. 230, in "New rules on conscientious objection" and following modifications;
- LAW Nov.14, 2000 No. 331, in "Rules for the institution of professional military service";
- PRIME MINISTER DECREE, Feb. 9, 2001 limiting the number objectors serving in the year 2001 to a maximum of 85.000;
- LAW March 6, 2001, No. 64 - Institution of national civilian service (published in Gazetta Ufficiale No. 68 March 22, 2001) –Draft law N. 7532 approved by Parliament on Feb. 14, 2001;
- PRIME MINISTER DECREE, Aug. 10, 2001, establishing the contingent of young people admitted to civilian service compliant to art. 6, paragraph 1, Law March 6, 2001, No. 64, and additional dispositions concerning the juridical and economical treatment and the relative monitoring programme;
- UNSC CIRCULAR on voluntary civilian service and on civilian service abroad – Dispositions providing for the start of the voluntary civilian service and for the civilian service abroad compliant to law March 6, 2001 No. 64 and law July 8, 1998 No. 230;

Regional laws on civilian service:

- REGIONAL LAW TUSCANY May 2, 1996, NO. 35 - Interventions on the matter of civilian service.
- REGIONAL LAW LIGURIA Nov. 24, 1997 NO. 46 - Interventions on the matter of civilian service.
- REGIONAL LAW ABRUZZO – Dec. 27, 1999, NO. 147 - Interventions on the matter of civilian service. - BURA No. 31 Special edition Dec. 28, 1999.
- REGIONAL LAW EMILIA ROMAGNA 28 Dec. 1999, NO. 38 – Rules to valorize civilian service.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albesano Sergio, (1993), *"Storia dell'obiezione di coscienza in Italia"*, Treviso, Santi Quaranta.

Ammendola Teresa, (1999b), *"Le Forze armate nell'era della globalizzazione"*, in Ammendola, 1999a, pp. 33-60.

Arci, (1982), *"Il servizio civile oggi, atti del convegno regionale"*, Turin, Arci Piemonte.

Archivio Disarmo, (1997), *"Servizio militare e servizio civile alla vigilia della riforma. Gli aspetti sociologici"*, Info-sheet system , No. 3, March.

Archivio Disarmo, (1997), *"I giovani e il servizio civile oggi a Rome. Indagine sociologica"*, Sistema informativo a schede, No. 8/9, Nov.

Assessorato regionale delle Politiche Sociali Regione Emilia Romagna (Regional Department for Social Politics, Emilia Romagna Region) (2000) *"Per un modello di Servizio civile"* – Progetto regionale "Civile che Vale"

Battistelli Fabrizio, (1996b) (edited by), *"Giovani e Forze armate. Aspetti sociologici della condizione giovanile e della comunicazione istituzionale"*, Milan, Angeli.

Battistelli Fabrizio, (1997c), *"Il servizio civile tra innovazione ed equità"*, in Il Mulino, July-August, pages. 767-771.

Battistelli Fabrizio, Bellocci Paolo, Pierangelo Isernia, (1999),), *"Servizio militare e servizio civile: le interazioni in vista del servizio civile nazionale"*, Research report, Rome, Cemiss.

Caforio Giuseppe, Nuciari Marina, (1995), *"Presente e futuro della professione militare in Europa."* L'ufficiale italiano, Rome, Cemiss-Rivista Militare.

Caligaris Luigi and Russo Nicola, (1991),), *"La condizione giovanile nel servizio di leva"*, Quaderni dell'Istrid No.17, Rome, Edizioni Difesa.

Camera dei Deputati, XIII Legislatura, (1998), *"Riforma della leva e nuovo strumento militare"*, Indagini conoscitive e documentazioni legislative No. 8, vol. I e II, Commissione IV (Difesa).

Cesc, (1985),), *"Inchiesta sugli obiettori in servizio civile"*, Rome, Cesc.

European Commission GD Education and Culture (1998) *"Guide to the Community programme European voluntary Service"*

European Commission GD Education and Culture (2001) *"Guide to the Youth programme" www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/youth.html*

National Congress of "Caritas Diocesane" (4-7 September 2000) *"Il Servizio civile del 2000, sfida di solidarietà alternativa alla guerra"* edited by National Area –Service Civilian Office

Davico Luca, (1990), *"Obiettori: profilo sociologico degli obiettori in servizio civile"*, Turin, Satygraha.

ISTAT (2000) *"Le organizzazioni di volontariato in Italia"* Note Rapide - Year 5 Number 3

Donati Marco and Simoni Delia (1998), *"Formarsi, Volontariamente. Servizio civile e volontariato come nuovi percorsi di cittadinanza e formazione"*, Associazione per la pace – InnovaNet

Donati Marco and Simoni Delia (1998), *"Giovani e volontariato in Europa: percorsi formativi e sbocchi professionali"* Associazione per la Pace – InnovaNet

Frisanco Renato *"Giovani Volontari", "I settori del Volontariato", from* Rivista Volontariato No. 7/8, 1998

Mancini Stefania *"Il Volontariato nei paesi membri dell'Unione Europea"* – Fondazione Italiana per il volontariato (Fivol)

Muzzarelli Gianluca, Pescatori Ugo, (1996), *"Possibili effetti della legge sull'obiezione di coscienza sull'assolvimento dei compiti istituzionali delle FF.AA.2", 2*, Rome, Cemiss-Rivista Militare.

Palidda Salvatore, (1993), *"Militari e mutamenti in Europa. Una prospettiva comparata"*, in Rivista trimestrale di Scienza dell'Amministrazione, No. 3-4, pp. 143-158.

Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri – Dipartimento per gli Affari Sociali *"La Bussola del volontariato – Guida per chi vuole fare volontariato"*, edited by VITA

Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri – Dipartimento per gli Affari Sociali, Commissione Europea DG Istruzione e Cultura *"Trampolino - Newsletter del Programma Europeo Gioventù"* NO. 1 / Jan 2001

CIVILIAN SERVICE WEB SITES

ANPAS
[http://www.anpas.org]

ARCI Servizio Civile
[http://www.serviziocivilearci.org/enterita.html]
ARCI web pages contain information on the civilian service legislation, on the training organized by ARCI and consociated associations and the number of employed objectors and the sectors.

ASSOCIAZIONE PER LA PACE
[http://www.romacivica.net/assopace/]
Secular, non-governmental association organizes campaigns for the military expense reduction and the conscientious objection defence in Italy and abroad.

CARITAS DIOCESANA ROMANA
[http://www.chiesacattolica.it/caritasroma/]
Caritas' web pages contain information on Caritas sectors and activities in Rome for defence of the weakest and for the diffusion of a peace culture.

CESC Coordinamento Enti servizio civile (Modena)
[http://www.comune.modena.it/associazioni/cesc/]
CESC web pages contain information on: the legislation concerning the civilian service and participating associations, on Emilia Romagna Regional Council and information on aspiring objectors (copy of the application form and lists of the organizations in Modena Province).

CNESC – Conferenza Nazionale Enti Servizio Civile
[http://www.anpas.org/ODC/indice.htm]

CISP – Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli International Committee for the Development of People
[http://www.cisp-ngo.org]

EROPEAN COMMISSION- CULTURE AND EDUCATION –Youth Programme
[http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/youth.html/[

COMUNE DI ROME
[http://comune.roma.it/infocittadino/schede/obiettori/civile.htm]

COMUNE DI TURIN
[http://www.comune.torino.it/infogio/servciv/]
Turin Municipality web pages (Informagiovani) contain a description of the service, the employment areas in the Municipality and the maximum number of objectors.

DIPARTIMENTO AFFARI SOCIALI
[http://www.affarisociali.it/]

FEDERSOLIDARIETA' – Confcooperative
[http://www.federsolidarieta.veneto.it/federsolid.htm]

FIVOL – FONDAZIONE ITALIANA DEL VOLONTARIATO
[http://www.fivol.it/]

Guida al servizio civile in Veneto
[http://www.paduanet.it/comune/infogiovani/]
Padua Municipality web pages (Informagiovani) contain a quick guide to the service (application, forms, attachments), legislative references, and national links with useful information for objectors and organizations, information on the draft office and on female civilian service.

Guida al servizio civile in Emilia Romagna
[http://www.regione.emilia-romagna.it/serviziocivile/]
The web pages explain the service: what it is, why to do it, the new law which regulates it, the Regional project, an introduction to the service and where and how to file the application to join the civilian service.

Guida al servizio civile in Liguria
[http://www.regione.liguria.it/menu/0904_fr.htm]
The Region web pages contain information on the civilian service in the region, the downloadable application form and a list of the participating organizations.

Guida al servizio civile in Tuscany
[http://www.rete.toscana.it/]
The web pages of the services network in Tuscany (click on social interventions and from there select civilian service) contain information on: the regional civilian service window, the toll free number, the categories that can apply and where, the Region and the National Civilian Service Office functions, and the most frequently asked questions.

Lega Obiettori di coscienza (LOC)
[http://www.peacelink.it/users/loc/]
It is the association of conscientious objectors to the military service and of those identifying themselves in the values of peace. The site contains a guide to conscientious objection, a specialized magazine, news and appeals.
LUNARIA
[http://www.lunaria.org/]

Obiezione Comune di Rome
[http://www.comune.roma.it/info_cittadino/schede/obiettori/civile.htm]

Ufficio Nazionale per il Servizio Civile
[http://serviziocivile.it]
The National Office web pages contain information on: the legislation on civilian service, the calendar of the relative debates, the participating organizations national list (upgraded and subdivided per region, municipality or name), the forms for objectors and organizations, the departure dates of the various contingents. On site are also links to regional and national sites, books and magazines on civilian service, newspapers, press reviews, it is also possible to receive e-mails with news on site.