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To: International Commissioners in the Europe Region WAGGGS and WOSM – European Region

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Dear friends in Guiding and Scouting,

### ***Ensuring the legacy of the European Year of Volunteering***

The European Year of Volunteering 2011 (EYV 2011) is successfully over. However, although the EYV 2011 has ended, our work continues. We must ensure the lasting legacy of the Year – at all levels - and the purpose of this letter is to share with you information about the main outcomes of the Year and inform you of the actions which the Regions are currently undertaking on volunteering, which, as you know, is one of our areas of joint work during this Triennium.

#### **What have been the outcomes of the EYV 2011?**

EYV 2011 provided us with an opportunity to strengthen the environment within which we work and to also strengthen our organisations and therefore our volunteers and their contribution to wider society.

Our aims for the year were:

- Increased participation in voluntary activities
- A greater awareness of the value of volunteering
- Reaching out to all Europeans and open Guiding and Scouting to more volunteers from all walks of life, especially those who are socially excluded.
- Increased recognition of volunteers and the voluntary activities that they undertake
- Removal of the barriers which prevent volunteering,
- Improving quality (organisation empowerment and volunteering opportunities) our organisations

Our objectives for the year were:

- to work together to maximise every opportunity during the Year to raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering;
- to get volunteer organisations empowered
- to improve the quality of volunteering within the movements;
- to reward and recognise volunteer activities
- to create a more enabling environment for volunteering.

We believe that we were able to achieve many of these aims and objectives and to contribute to the continuing discussions on volunteering policy at European level. We hope if your association participated in the EYV activities at national level that you also benefitted from being involved.

One of the major outcomes of EYV2011 has been the Policy Agenda on Volunteering in Europe, which was presented to the European Commission at the EU Conference to close the European Year of Volunteering in Warsaw in December 2011. The PAVE makes a number of recommendations, which the EYV Alliance believes would support and promote volunteers, volunteering and volunteer-involving organizations more effectively.

World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts  
Association Mondiale des Guides et Eclaireuses



World Organization of the Scout Movement  
Organisation Mondiale du Mouvement Scout

It focuses on the four objectives of the European Year of Volunteering from the European Council decision in 2009:

- Work towards an enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering in the EU.
- Empower organizers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary activities.
- Recognize voluntary activities in order to encourage appropriate incentives for individuals, companies and volunteer development organizations.
- Raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering.

It identifies 4 different groups of stakeholders who are involved in this process: the European Institutions; EU Member States; social partners (employers and trade unions); and volunteer organizations themselves. It stresses that all stakeholders involved in volunteering should work together for better policies at European and national level to reduce the barriers to volunteering and some of the recommendations are addressed to all of these groups; other recommendations are specifically targeted to a particular stakeholder.

More information on the PAVE, its relevance for Guiding and Scouting, and how it can be used to support your activities at national level is currently being produced and will be sent to you as soon as possible. In the meantime you can download the PAVE here:

[http://www.eyv2011.eu/images/stories/pdf/EYV2011Alliance\\_PAVE\\_copyfriendly.pdf](http://www.eyv2011.eu/images/stories/pdf/EYV2011Alliance_PAVE_copyfriendly.pdf)

We would like to thank all Guides and Scouts who took an active part in the Year's activities - many NSOs and MOs were involved in their National Coordinating Bodies, and WOSM and WAGGGS volunteers represented Guiding and Scouting at the thematic conferences organized by the European Commission on different aspects of volunteering and played an active role in the working groups of the EYV 2011 Alliance, the development of the PAVE and in promoting it at national level.

One example of the way in which Guide and Scout Associations have taken advantage of the European Year of Volunteering to support volunteers and develop volunteering in their organization comes from the Pfadfinder und Pfadfinderinnen Österreichs (PPÖ). PPÖ formulated several goals which could be achieved by the process of working on the European Year Of Volunteering, one of which was to recognize the contribution of volunteers within Austrian Guiding and Scouting as well as raising awareness within the Association of their achievements. They organized a competition called "Volunteer –Make a Difference " (the theme of EYV 2011) where local troops were encouraged to submit volunteer projects they had carried out – the projects were judged by the National Commissioners for each section and Parents' Councils, and the troops received prizes for their efforts. Even though the year has ended, PPÖ are continuing to recognize the contribution of their volunteers by organizing a camp in May 2012 called "Thx a lot" for PPÖ leaders and volunteers, where they can experience for themselves the methods they are using, update their training and network and exchange with other leaders and volunteer across Austria.

Some more examples of Guide and Scout activities during EYV2011 can also be found in the yearbook of the EYV Alliance which you can find here: <http://www.eyv2011.eu/yearbook-2011>

### **How will the work on volunteering continue?**

To help ensure a lasting legacy for the Year, we are planning to **collect evidence of what is being done at national level and share it with the membership of both our Regions**. During EYV2011, some information on Guide and Scout activities or projects at national level were already shared with you at <http://eyv2011.europak-online.net/> and [www.euroscoutinfo.com](http://www.euroscoutinfo.com).

During 2012 both regions are planning to produce documents with inspiring examples of best practices – WOSM – European Region will produce a EuroScout.Doc on Volunteering while the Europe region WAGGGS has received funding from the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe to produce a toolkit on Volunteering at the end of the year. Therefore, we would like you to send information, such as we have already received from some Guide and Scout Associations like PPÖ about the different ways in which you recruit, retain, motivate and support volunteers in your association, how you recognize the skills they have gained and ensure they have a quality volunteering experience. Please can you complete the attached questionnaire, and return it to [volunteering@europak-online.net](mailto:volunteering@europak-online.net) by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2012. You can also complete the survey online [here](#) and upload information about any best practices you would like to share. Please help us share your best practices across Europe with other Guide and Scout associations. Thank you!

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or would like further information on the work of the Regions on volunteering.

Yours in Guiding and Scouting



Lara Tonna  
Chairman  
European Committee WAGGGS



Craig Turpie  
Chairman  
European Scout Committee