



VOLUNTARY SERVICE INTERNATIONAL

ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT 2023

1 January - 31 December 2023

Voluntary Service International (VSI)

Carmichael House, 4 Brunswick Street North, Dublin, D07 RHA8, Ireland

Voluntary Service International (VSI) is a limited company having no share capital.

Company number: 40520; CHY (Revenue) Number: 9220; Registered Charity Number: 20023065

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1. Message from the Chairperson

Looking around the world, at the conflicts which dominate our headlines, and those which are as severe but largely ignored, I don't need to explain why peacebuilding is so important.

Peacebuilding is not just about resolving conflict. It is about creating trust and solidarity between people and working together for a just and sustainable world.

VSI and SCI exist to play our modest role in creating the conditions for peace, working together to understand each other and work together. SCI's first project, over a hundred years ago, involved German and French volunteers rebuilding a village in the battlefields of Flanders after the First World War. VSI started with a cross-border project in the 1960s, as the tensions in Northern Ireland started to bubble to the surface.

This report describes how VSI has emerged from the limitations of the COVID lockdown in 2023 to resume the work of placing and hosting volunteers, promoting understanding and action for climate justice and equality and building personal bonds of friendship and solidarity across countries and cultures.

The effectiveness of this work has been made possible by the creativity and commitment of our strong staff team led by CEO Helen Walmsley, along with Eiméar Savage as Programmes Coordinator, supported by European Solidarity Corps (ESC) volunteers Seán Maguire, Annabelle Burova, Alex Murray and Sophie Carthy and with Del Thorogood providing bookkeeping and administrative support.

This work could not have happened without the support of our funders. Our largest tranche of funding comes from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) through the Youth Service Grant and the Youth Capital Fund and Youth Climate Justice Fund along with the European Commission (through the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) programme, administered by Léargas). Our Global Citizenship Education programmes for volunteers, educators and the public are funded by Irish Aid. We also received a grant from the Health Service Executive. We are grateful for the support from DCEDIY as part of the Shared Services Support in accounts and governance delivered through Bradan accountants and The Wheel, coordinated by NYCI. Throughout the year we received project and membership fees and generous donations from members, volunteers and donors.

We work in a broader network of contacts, and we are signatories to Comhlámh, Dóchas and IDEA codes for quality and standards. We are also a member of the National Youth Council of Ireland.

As I complete my term as Chairperson, I would particularly like to express my appreciation for the current and past Board members who give their time voluntarily to guide the organisation through difficult times.

Above all, I would like to acknowledge the volunteers and members who are the lifeblood of the organisation for their work in Ireland, internationally and online and we hope that you will continue to be part of VSI as we plan for our 60th Anniversary celebrations.

Robin Hanan, Chairperson



2. Message from the CEO

In 2023 we were delighted to get back to our usual volunteering activities following the pandemic. Highlights included organising our International Volunteer Projects with our partner organisations, Glebe House (Harmony Community Trust) in Strangford and Killarney National Park, who hosted volunteers from both Ireland and abroad. Other highpoints included organising a group of young volunteers from Dublin to work with refugee families and communities in Athens with our Greek branch, and continuing to provide individual longer-term volunteer opportunities for young people from Ireland in Europe (both EU-funded by the European Solidarity Corps programme through Leargas).

We continued to develop our Global Citizenship Education (GCE) programme, completing the first year of our Irish Aid funded series of workshops with our volunteers as well as hosting monthly meetups on various topics, including Irish Neutrality & Anti-militarism and the SDGs & Agenda 2030. As part of our GCE programme we worked with young people on our Youth Climate Justice project, funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), the group explored the climate crisis focusing on the inequalities caused by climate change. Our Dublin Local Group volunteers were finally able to get back to work fully after the pandemic, improving homes through practical work (funded by the HSE).

We held our first in-person residential weekend following the pandemic; volunteers, activists, members, board and staff enjoyed a weekend in Monaghan, hosted by Síolta Chroí. We explored our priorities, direction and future work, as well as getting stuck in to some manual voluntary work for a few hours and socialising together.

I'd like to sincerely and wholeheartedly thank all our funders, donors and project hosts, our dedicated members, activists, participants, board members and staff team, and especially our committed and passionate participants and volunteers.

It has been great to get back working with all our volunteers and stakeholders in Ireland and across the globe in solidarity, collaborating on our projects focused on social justice and sustainable development and promoting a culture of peace. We aim to grow and develop these relationships in the coming years, and we look forward to marking our 60th anniversary in 2025 and celebrating all that we have achieved together.

Helen Walmsley, CEO



3. About VSI



Voluntary Service International (VSI) is the Irish branch of Service Civil International (SCI), a worldwide peace movement that began after the First World War. We are a volunteer-based movement founded in 1965 and headquartered in Dublin. For over 55 years we have promoted peace, social justice and sustainable development at home and abroad. During that time walls have fallen, borders have moved and the challenges facing us have changed. While many things have undoubtedly improved, there are still many of the old problems (e.g. conflict, human rights) alongside the emergence of new problems (e.g. climate change, growing inequality).

These challenges are large and multifaceted but we at VSI believe we can play a part in addressing them. At the heart of many of these problems is a lack of understanding. Of people, their backgrounds, their cultures, their own day-to-day challenges. Of the environment, its importance, its fragility, our impact on it. And the interdependence of all of these things.

The tool we have chosen to help combat this is a simple one, but we know through experience that it is a powerful one: volunteering. By bringing together volunteers from across the globe we aim to increase awareness and understanding of the people, the societies and the environment around us. This deeper understanding will contribute to a global and local society which is more open-minded, aware and responsible for its own behaviour and actions. We are able to do this with the help of our network partner organisations at home and abroad, enabling volunteering experiences that promote peace, social justice and sustainable development. In 56 years, we have achieved a lot as an organisation. We recognise that over this time the world has changed and that we, as VSI, need to adapt to this and the new challenges it presents.

Our vision is a world of peace, social justice and sustainable development, where all people live together with mutual respect

Our mission is to promote a culture of peace, social justice and sustainable development by organizing and supporting volunteering projects, both in Ireland and internationally.

Our values:

Non-violence: choosing peaceful resistance and conflict resolution without recourse to violence as a principle and a method

Human Rights: Respect for individuals as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Solidarity: International solidarity for a more just and equitable world, and solidarity between all human beings

Respect for the Environment and the ecosystems of which we are a part and upon which we are dependent

Inclusion: being open and inclusive of all individuals without discrimination

Empowerment: providing people with knowledge and tools to understand and act to transform the social, cultural and economic structures that affect their lives at all levels

Co-operation with local communities as well as other local, national and international partners to strengthen the positive potential within civil society as a whole

4. Legal and Administrative Details

Directors:

Robin Hanan (Chair)

Nikita Patak (Treasurer)

Aidan Graver

Máille Brady-Bates (to June 2023)

Claire Devlin

Dervla King

Eamon Tuffy (10th June 2023)

Voluntary Service International (VSI) is a limited company having no share capital.

Company registered number: 40520

Charity tax exemption number CHY Number: 9220

Charity Regulatory Authority number (Registered Charity Number): 20023065

Registered office: 4 Brunswick Street North, Dublin, D07 RHA8, Ireland

Company Secretary: Helen Walmsley

CEO: Helen Walmsley

Board Committees: The Finance Sub-Committee of the Board was composed of Nikita Patak, Aidan Graver, Robin Hanan and Helen Walmsley, with Del Thorogood in attendance

The Governance Policy and Compliance Committee was chaired by Claire Devlin and included Máille Brady-Bates, Robin Hanan and Helen Walmsley.

VSI is now fully compliant with the Charities Regulator's Governance Code.

Accountants: Bradan, 19 College Green, Dublin 2

Auditor: Roberts Nathan, 9 Exchange Place, International Financial Services Centre, Dublin 1

Bankers: PTSB, 70 Grafton Street, Dublin 2

3. VSI Staff & Office

VSI Programmes Coordinator, Eimear

“My first full year as Programmes Coordinator with VSI was exciting, challenging and busy! I feel very lucky to have had the chance to attend so many interesting events and participate in lots of inspiring meetings and discussions. Particularly memorable was VSI’s return to hosting international volunteer projects in Ireland after the COVID-19 pandemic. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to meet the volunteers who travelled from all over to participate in these projects. I am always encouraged by the enthusiasm of our volunteers and members to get involved in our work and I am excited at the prospect of what the future holds for VSI and my role in that.”



ESC Volunteers hosted by VSI

VSI said goodbye to our two ESC volunteers, Annabelle (Programmes Officer) and Sean (Marketing & Communications Officer), in the Autumn of 2023. We wish them all the best for the future!



Sean

“It’s hard to believe that a year passed so quickly, but I’m so grateful to have been given this opportunity. I have met so many new people, and made so many new experiences. But I have also learned so much about global issues and activism, and feel proud of the work I have done this year.”



Annabelle

“Completing my ESC as a Programmes Officer at VSI was a year filled with learning and new connections. I gained a lot of new knowledge about global citizenship education and climate justice. Every month at the monthly meetups, I was introduced to a new topic and got to meet new people. But what truly stood out for me was supporting other young ESC volunteers in their journeys abroad. Overall this experience, all the people I met and the information I gained, is something that continues to inspire me on my next adventures.”



Alex

(Programmes Officer from August 2023)

"I am looking forward to gaining some experience in the field of volunteering. I am excited to begin working with VSI's incredible volunteers, and to assist them in finding the programmes that that are best suited to them. Furthermore, I am delighted to have the opportunity to be part of an organisation that embodies values so similar to my own, such as solidarity, inclusion, empowerment and respect for the environment."



Sophie

(Marketing & Communications Officer from October 2023)

"Through my recent degree in psychology, I learned more about people and the importance of human rights, social inclusion, and justice for all. Due to this, I was delighted to receive the opportunity to work with VSI, which has similar values to mine. I look forward to gaining experience in the non-profit sector as a volunteer for VSI. I am excited to hopefully make a change in others' lives and help them along the way."

5. Programmes

2023 has been a busy and exciting year for us as we continue with our activities after the huge impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Particularly important was our return to hosting international volunteers on our projects in Ireland.

Although overall our outgoing volunteer numbers increased, our outgoing IVP volunteers remained low. Many of our branches maintained COVID related restrictions on projects, which reduced the number of IVPs we offered in 2023. In 2022 16 of our volunteers participated in online IVPs, with 3 in-person. Online IVPs ceased almost entirely, so this also reduced the opportunities we offered during 2023. In addition, we decided to resume sending volunteers to the Global South only at the end of the year. Our European Solidarity Corps (ESC) programme continued to grow, we sent 34 volunteers on individual ESC projects (we sent 24 in 2022). We also sent a group of 6 young people from Dublin to Athens, Greece, on an ESC teams project. We sent 6 participants on international training seminars. Without a doubt, we had a busy year full of exciting activities and dedicated volunteers! Read on to hear more about our volunteer programmes in 2023.

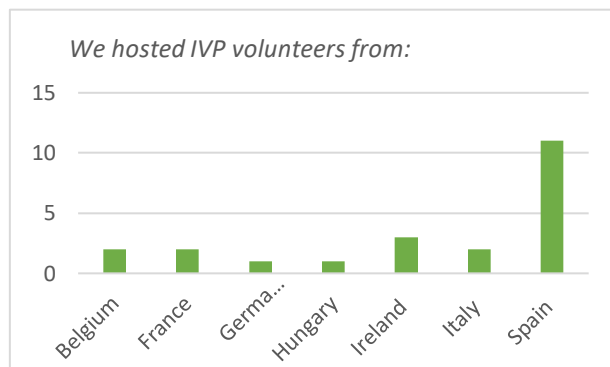
Volunteering

The numbers

International Volunteer Projects (IVP)



Outgoing: we sent a total of 10 volunteers from Ireland. Four of these were age 25 or under; two were 26-39 years; four were 40 years and over. Four female and 6 male.

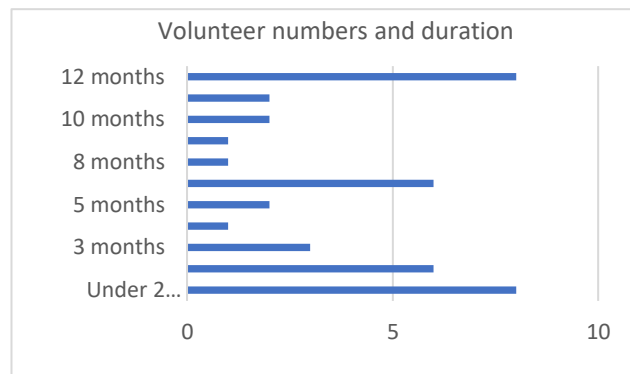


Incoming: We hosted 22 volunteers. 18 of these were 25 or under; 3 were 26-39 years; 1 was over 40 years. 13 were female, 9 male.

European Solidarity Corps (ESC)

(Individual & teams projects abroad)

We sent a total of 40 volunteers. 33 of these were 25 years old or under; 7 were 26-30 years. 23 female and 17 male. 8 volunteers went to Greece and to France, 5 to Italy, 3 to Spain, 2 to Germany, Belgium and to Finland, and 1 each to Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Hungary, Bulgaria, Slovakia, , Finland, Portugal, Sweden, the UK and Poland.



The detail

International Volunteer Projects (IVPs)

Outgoing

Project Name	Project Activities
Berlin Deutsch Camp VJF Germany	Teaching German to non-native speakers
Glebe House VSI Ireland	Creating community garden, repairing and restoring children's playground
Local Traditions with International Skills at Folk Music Festival KVT Finland	Practice & perform group music recital for festival
A social living model (Cologne) SCI Germany	Upcycling, wood crafts, experiencing 'social living' model & sustainable lifestyles
For Climate 3.0 IPDJ Portugal	Collection of seeds, maintenance work in plant nursery.
Renovate a Baroque rectory in Semnevice INEX Czech Republic	Renovating a Baroque rectory, building a sustainable community, supporting educational activities.
Prisoner's Testimonies of the AEL Ohrbeck SCI Germany	Workshops, talks, museum visits and excursions. Helping with archaeological excavations.
Open Air Filmfest Weiterstadt	Building an open-air cinema & festival area. Supporting the festival.
Killarney National Park Woodland Conservation	Work on natural methods of rhododendron control in remote mountain areas of the park.

"It was a great experience to participate in this volunteer project and meet volunteers from Mexico, Azerbaijan, India, Serbia and Finland. The local hosts were very welcoming and made us feel part of the local community. We even joined a group of local women and Ukrainian refugees making a local delicacy 'Karelian pies' for sale during the festival. I would certainly take part in another SCI IVP."

Del, volunteer in Finland at a Folk Music Festival



Incoming

VSI hosted our first international in-person volunteer projects since the COVID-19 pandemic this summer, with a total of 22 volunteers from 7 different countries taking part.

Glebe House, County Down

At the end of May, 3 volunteers attended our project in Glebe House from Hungary, Spain and Ireland. They worked with other local volunteers to create a new community garden project, helped repair and restore a children's playground, looked after the donkeys and tidied and cleaned up the centre and the grounds.

"Glebe House was a great experience. I got to know different people even though we were a small group. This is the perfect project for those interested in Ireland's history. We helped with some gardening and also repaired a path. It was such a good decision going to Glebe House and I took with me some beautiful memories."

Nerea, Glebe House volunteer



Killarney National Park Woodland Conservation

We hosted two in-person projects in Killarney National Park in July and August. Volunteers helped with the control of rhododendron using natural methods such as breaking off seedling heads, and helped to construct dead hedges using rhododendron that was cut down. 7 volunteers attended the first project, from Italy, Spain and Belgium and 12 attended the second one, from Italy, Spain, Germany, France and Ireland. We are very happy that we could resume hosting in-person projects in Ireland this year and we look forward to hosting more volunteers in Ireland next year!

Yana: *"I learned so much about nature and plants and different cultures"*

Nikita: *"The programmes create opportunities for volunteers to explore other cultures and issues that previously they would not have faced."*



European Solidarity Corps (ESC) Sending Programme

VSI has been awarded a Quality Label by the Irish national agency, Léargas, which recognises our ability to deliver high quality solidarity activities in accordance with the principles, objectives and quality standards of the European Solidarity Corps, as both a coordinating and partner organisation. This EU-funded programme provides 18-30 year olds with volunteer opportunities with a wide variety of not-for-profit organisations, either abroad or in their home country, ranging from 2 weeks to 12 months. In addition to sending individual ESC volunteers, we were delighted to be able to return to coordinating an ESC teams group project, with a group of young people from Ireland to Greece.

Alice: 6 months, Italy. Social centre supporting people with disabilities, young people, refugees, migrants and the local community:

"I work mostly with refugees and in the communications sector of my organisation, assisting migrants learning Italian and English, for example. Recently, I have been able to work with a service supporting young people doing theatre workshops and in the kitchen of a centre for the homeless. I've really enjoyed being in Turin and all the city has to offer."

Megan: 1 year, Belgium. Alternative education centre with animals:

"I volunteer at Centrum Molenmoes. Specifically, I work with the Equicanis team. They specialize in equine therapy. In the morning, I look after the horses; mucking out, feeding them, grooming them and training them. Sometimes we run workshops with teenagers involving dogs or horses. We cook lunch at the centre every day, and we all eat together. After lunch, I work with the teenagers at the youth centre. We can run any kind of workshop we want and have all kinds of facilities at our disposal! I like to draw and make crafts, and I hope to publish a comic created with the teenagers during my time here."



Adam: 4 months, Sweden. Europe Direct office, promoting EU initiatives for young people e.g. Erasmus+ and the ESC programme:

"I work with people from many different backgrounds, so this project has given me a chance to see new perspectives on life. Alongside the work, I have had the chance to travel and explore different towns and cities in Sweden, and I have been able to experience incredible nature reserves near to where I live!"



Dylan: 5 months, Greece. LGBTQI+ group helping to organise Pride festival:

"I did a long-term ESC with Thessaloniki Pride, in Greece. The main goal of the organization is to advance LGBT+ rights throughout the region. As part of my role here, I manage our social media, organize events (such as our annual Pride parade) and engage in workshops about LGBT+ topics. I am really looking forward to what the near future holds!"

Hanna: 9 months, France. Bayeux Town Hall helping to organise European Week:

"Through my programme I've been involved in many different cultural projects and because of this, I feel as if I'm an essential part of the town community. Just recently, the city hall launched a project called #BAYEUXFOREUROPE to promote European solidarity, and I'm the face of it!"



Fionn: 6 months, Belgium. European Network for Independent Living (ENIL)

“My ESC volunteer experience was amazing. It was my first time living outside Ireland, and my sense of independent accomplishment was huge.”

Fionn and our CEO Helen when they met up in Brussels in December



‘Step Up!’ ESC Team

In June we sent a group of 6 young people from Dublin to our branch in Greece, SCI Hellas, to volunteer on an ESC teams project called ‘Step Up!’.

They volunteered with 4 young people from Greece on the project for 3 weeks, working with migrant children and young people in a community and sports centre in Athens. They also helped out in a soup kitchen for homeless people, visited a centre supporting migrants in Athens.

They learnt about the international refugee crisis, its impact on Greece and the issues refugees face in Greece.



Dublin Local Group

The Dublin Local Group (DLG) of VSI undertakes to improve the living conditions of elderly, disabled and marginalised people living in Dublin. We only help out in situations where the living standards of a person or family have fallen well below the general and acceptable levels and where people are unable to help themselves for whatever reason, for example physical, social or financial situation.

Our group is made up solely of volunteers. We are not professional painters and decorators but we are committed to completing any work we execute to the highest standard. We have many long-standing members who have gained valuable experience along the way.

The type of work we do involves cleaning and clearing, painting, gardening and small repairs. This year, most of our work referrals came from the HSE, Social Work Departments of Dublin City Council, Focus Ireland or ALONE. We visit and assess all referrals and decisions are made by the group.



In 2023, the Dublin Local Group got back to its first year of full volunteering since Covid started. It was with great pleasure that we all got back to our regular weekly activities.

A few figures for DLG in 2023:

- We had 8 active and long-standing volunteers
- We received 31 requests for assistance of which we visited 19 and completed 11
- We spent 33 weeks volunteering

One of the projects that really stood out for all of us this year was helping one of our clients with reduced mobility moving to a more suitable house. This involved the help of all 8 volunteers on 2 different days, a real great example of teamwork! We got the warmest thank you for the client and the person who referred them.

As some of our volunteers have limited time to volunteer on Saturdays, we trialled volunteering in the evenings during the week. And we are very pleased to report that it worked very well. The group now offers two weekly options to volunteer to the delight of our clients.

The biggest challenge we are facing now is the lack of new volunteers. Our objective for 2024 is to recruit at least 3 new members by the end of this year.

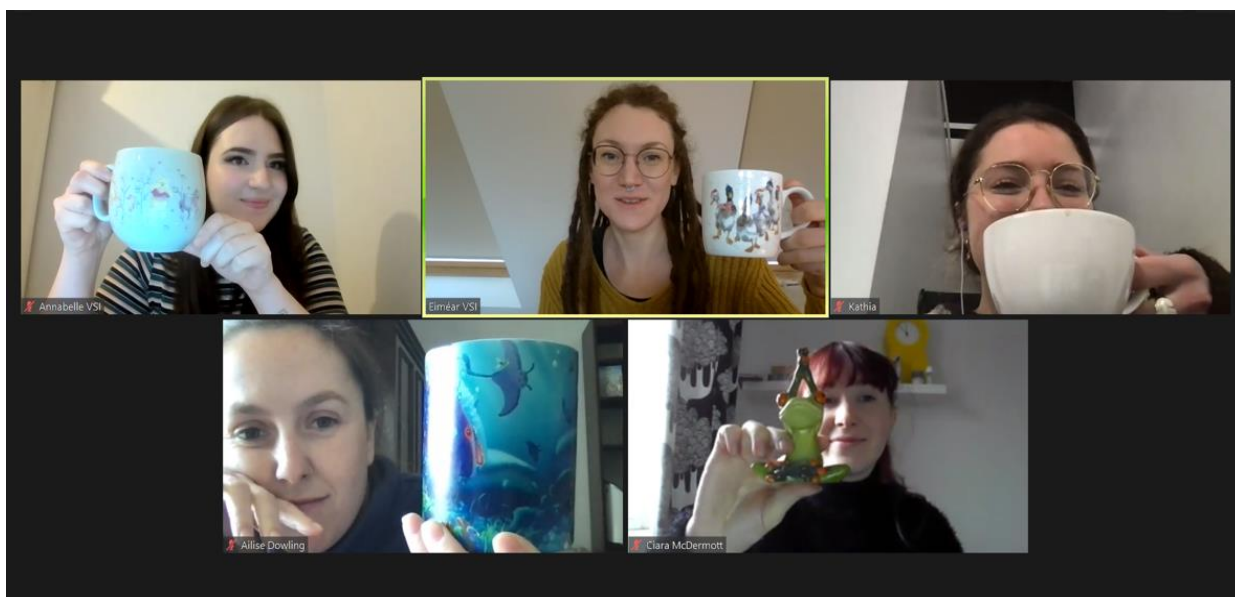
Global Citizenship Education

'From Volunteering to Global Citizenship'

In spring of this year, VSI received funding from Irish Aid to continue running our Global Citizenship Education (GCE) programme with our volunteers for an additional 3 years from August 2023 – July 2026. This is an important development to help us deliver on our goals and targets such as those set out in our self-assessment submission for the IDEA Code of Good Practice on Development Education, as well as in our strategic plan. It has also enabled us to strengthen the links between our overall mission and values, and our work.

The programme - 'From Volunteering to Global Citizenship' - consists of GCE workshops for volunteers - one prior to their volunteering and one after their return. We also hold Monthly Meetups on topics related to global justice, with our volunteers choosing the topics and facilitating the workshops. These workshops and meetups are mainly online, with two in-person meetups per year.

While we had great success with our monthly meetups, we struggled with low attendance at our GCE workshops as our volunteer numbers were low in 2023, related to the ongoing impact of the COVID pandemic on international volunteering. As a result, we hosted only 2 workshops for volunteers in 2023, as opposed to our goal of 6. We did, however, host 10 meetups in 2023, 2 of which were in person. We also hosted our Youth for Climate Justice Project for the 3rd year running.



Workshops

Early in the year, we hosted two GCE workshops for volunteers – one for new volunteers called 'Taking the First Step' and one for returned volunteers called 'Next Steps'. 4 volunteers attended these workshops, in which they explored the root causes and connections between local and global issues, and critically examined global development and international volunteering, as well as reflecting on the global issues addressed in their placement and how they can continue to address

these issues locally. Both workshops were jointly facilitated by Eiméar and Annabelle, where volunteers and facilitators alike engaged in a range of thought-provoking activities and discussions.

Monthly Meetups

Throughout the year, we held regular meetups on a wide range of topics related to global justice, with a total of 66 participants. Most of them were online, with two in-person in February and November. During our meetups, participants learn about a global issue through online activities and interaction with each other, as well as hearing from our volunteer host.

Topics covered during our meetups include ‘White Saviourism in International Volunteering’, hosted by past ESC volunteer Isabel Garland after attending an Erasmus+ seminar with SCI Austria called ‘The Power of Good Intentions’. Our April meetup was on the Circular Economy, and was hosted by Youth for Climate Justice participant Margarita Baturova, and, in May, we were delighted to invite Siphwe Moyo to host a meetup on the Irish International Protection System. In June, to mark International Refugee Day, we learned about the Global Migration Crisis from Jessica Howard, a past ESC volunteer and, in July, VSI’s ESC volunteer Sean Maguire hosted a meetup on Anti-militarism and Irish Neutrality, having attended an international project ran by SCI called ‘No War Anywhere’.

Youth for Climate Justice

We held our annual Youth for Climate Justice Project for the 3rd year running at the end of November in which ten young people between 18 and 25 years old participated. We held a week of online workshops, including social media and campaigns training, with a final in-person workshop. Workshops were led by Eiméar, with a guest facilitator to carry out the social media training. We also facilitated the screening of a documentary for participants to watch and discuss solutions to climate change.

Participants learned about the climate crisis from a human-centred perspective, focusing on the inequalities created by climate change. They also created their own climate justice social-media campaigns, which were shared by VSI. 5 participants went on to complete facilitation skills training with VSI in the new year with one hosting the January meetup. All participants received certificates for their participation at the end of the project. *Image from one of the social media campaigns by the participants.*



International Trainings & Seminars

Throughout the year, VSI sent volunteers to various international trainings and seminars, most of which were run by SCI branches/partners. All of these volunteers went on to host monthly meetups on topics related to their seminar.

Agenda 2030 - How Can We Achieve the

SDGs?: This project was hosted by SCI Madrid in March, with VSI volunteers, Aine Boyle and Jacky Casserly, attending. They spent the week discussing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), how they are connected, and how we can work towards them.

No War Anywhere!: This anti-militarism training was run by the International Secretariat of SCI and funded by the Council of Europe. It consisted of two in-person seminars, ‘Utopias Against War’, hosted by SCI Italy in April, and ‘Strategies Against War’, hosted by SCI Austria in June. VSI’s Marketing and Communications ESC volunteer, Sean, attended both seminars.



Youth Development through Emotional Awareness (YDEA): This was run by SCI partner, CVS Bulgaria, in June. The aim was to equip participants with knowledge and skills in the area of emotional intelligence and social emotional learning to promote more effective youth development and inclusion. VSI sent two volunteers, Emmet Griffin and Rebecca Labour.

Peaceweek - Climate & Migrations: This was hosted by SCI Catalunya in November, with past Youth for Climate Justice participant, Susan Higgins, attending. They explored topics including colonialism, capitalism, and climate migration.



VSI Residential Weekend



In March we held a residential weekend for volunteers, activists, board members and staff, our first in-person residential weekend post-pandemic. Through workshops we explored how VSI can respond to volunteers' changing expectations and motivations, how we can contribute more to ecological sustainability and embedding our values in all our activities. It was great to spend time together and socialise. We also got our hands dirty volunteering, proudly building a dead hedge and we learnt more about the work of our hosts, Síolta Chroí in Monaghan, who work to restore Ireland's ecosystems and communities.

6. Memberships & Networks

VSI's Strategic Plan reaffirms our commitment to working in partnership with organisations which share our aims. We continue to play an active role in a number of networks from which we receive support and advice throughout the year. These organisations provide networking events and training that VSI staff and volunteers participate in, and advocate to ensure the interests of organisations like VSI are heard at national and governmental level.

IDEA Code Network

VSI has been a member of the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) for many years and in 2021, we signed up to their Code of Good Practice for Development Education. Code members commit to strengthening their development education practice through an annual self-assessment process. The self-assessment process has been a great opportunity for the VSI staff and Board to discuss and reflect on VSI's work in this area. VSI has a long history of development education, and we are committed to growing and strengthening our practice in this area, using the IDEA Code as a framework to guide us.



NYCI Membership

The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) is the representative body for voluntary youth organisations in Ireland, and VSI has been a member for many years. NYCI acts as a liaison and support between member organisations and the DCEDIY regarding the Youth Service Grant (YSG). The NYCI was integral to setting-up and supporting the DCEDIY's Shared Services support for small organisations in receipt of the YSG which VSI benefits from by way of accountancy support and governance training. Helen attends NYCI Heads of Organisations and Specialist Organisations meetings throughout the year. NYCI processes VSI's Garda Vetting applications for our volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults and also provides support in this and many other areas.



Comhlámh Code of Good Practice

Comhlámh nurtures, guides and mobilises development workers and volunteers to work for social justice locally and globally. VSI is a signatory to Comhlámh's Code of Good Practice, a set of standards for Irish Volunteer Sending Agencies facilitating international placements. Over the years, VSI staff and volunteers attend Comhlámh's very useful Peer Support Meetings. Being a signatory to the Code has improved VSI's volunteer programmes, and the services and support that we provide to our volunteers.



dóchas

The Irish Association
of Non-Governmental
Development Organisations

Dóchas Member

VSI has also been a member of Dóchas, the Irish Association for Non-Governmental Development Organisations for many years.

7. Get Involved!

VOLUNTEER WITH VSI!

Our International Volunteer Projects (IVP) are a unique form of volunteering that bring together people from around the world to work on short-term projects with local communities. Projects usually last 2 weeks and the type of work involved varies greatly. As a volunteer on one of our projects, you will only need to work as much as you are able. Volunteers get the chance to live and work in a diverse environment with people from different cultures and backgrounds, gaining experience and understanding of the day-to-day lives of people from other parts of the world.

We believe that a greater awareness of global issues and a deeper understanding of people will help to create an international culture that is more peaceful, open-minded, and responsible for its actions. Our network of volunteers helps us to promote our vision by living and promoting a culture of peace, social justice, and sustainable development worldwide.

VSI hopes that anyone interested in contributing to our vision will find a project in our list of diverse and exciting database of international opportunities.

Info on our [IVP programme](#), on [all our programmes](#) and sign up to our [mailing list here](#).

BECOME A MEMBER

Members are the heart of VSI. Without a strong membership, we could not maintain or develop our programmes which are just as important to us now as they were when VSI was founded over 55 years ago, or when our international movement SCI was founded over 100 years ago.

As well as being a part of the VSI community and supporting our work, as a member of VSI you will have:

- Access to a wide range of national, international and online volunteering opportunities
- Regular membership updates and volunteering news through bulletins and newsletters
- Opportunities to get involved with ongoing projects and events in Ireland
- Access to training and seminar opportunities in Ireland, abroad and online
- Invitation to our AGM and the opportunity to contribute your ideas to VSI
- The opportunity to support our vision and mission, share our values, and contribute ideas to further develop and progress our organisation and our impact

[Join us and get involved!](#)

Contact Information: Voluntary Service International (VSI), e-mail info@vsi.ie; contact us on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

8. Financial Information

[View our full 2023 Financial Statements on our website here.](#)

	Actual 2023	Actual 2022	Variance
	€	€	€
Income	200,701	189,381	11,320
Expenditure	198,335	177,807	20,528
Net Surplus	2,366	11,574	-9,208

	Actual 2023	Actual 2022	Variance
	€	€	€
Income			
Dept of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	119,918	109,301	+10,617
Donations	1,350	200	+1,150
HSE	3,143	3,143	-
Irish Aid	11,224	7,358	+3,866
Leargas	49,415	62,600	-13,185
Membership & Project Fees	7,429	2,917	+4,512
ESC Sending Fees	7,314	3,862	+3,452
Other	908	0	+908
Total Income	200,701	189,381	+11,320

	Actual 2023	Actual 2022	Variance
	€	€	€
Expenditure			
Salaries	103,362	95,126	+8,236
Rent	8,174	15,388	-7,214
Project Costs	36,971	43,814	-6,843
Depreciation	7,605	5,807	+1,798
Financial: banking audit - bookkeeping	11,948	8,712	+3,236
Training & Development	9,676	463	+9,213
Insurance	2,812	2,068	+744
Other	17,787	6,430	+11,357
Total Expenditure	198,335	177,808	+20,527