

CHECKLIST VOLUNTEERING

IS VOLUNTEERING FOR ME?

You have been living **IN BELGIUM FOR A WHILE NOW**. Perhaps you are still waiting for an answer to your asylum application. Or maybe you already have a residence status.

YOU LEARN THE LANGUAGE & GET TO KNOW NEW PEOPLE.

Maybe someone has already told you about volunteering.

Below is a **LIST OF TIPS AND QUESTIONS** for **REFUGEES** who want to do **VOLUNTARY WORK**.

GENERAL



WHO?

Anyone with a valid residence permit can do voluntary work.



WHAT?

Working as a volunteer means that you help a social organisation, willingly and without being paid. Many Belgians do voluntary work, even if they have a paid job.



WHERE?

Volunteering is done for

SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS:

- + school
- + environmental organisation
- + retirement home
- ...

- baker
- butcher
- plumber
- ...



COMPENSATION?

★ Usually you **don't** get paid

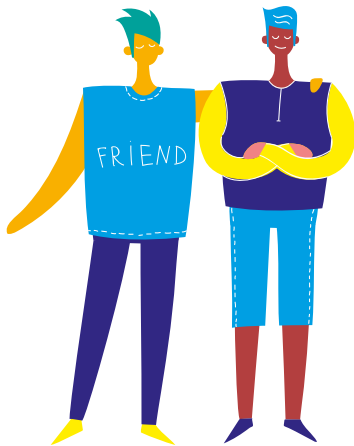
★ Sometimes expenses you have made for your voluntary work **are reimbursed**, e.g. bicycle commuting reimbursement, bus ticket ...

★ Sometimes you get a **flat-rate allowance** for your work.

CAREFUL:

the amount you can receive per year is capped.

» report this allowance to the OCMW if you receive a living wage.



REPORTING?

Staying in a reception centre or local reception initiative:  report your voluntary work to your counsellor or social assistant.

Do you receive unemployment benefit:  report your voluntary work in advance to the union or social security office.

Do you receive a living wage:  report your voluntary work to your OCMW officer.



INSURANCE?

Normally you are covered when volunteering. **Be sure to check this** with the organisation.

TO DO

- CHECK YOUR RESIDENCE PERMIT
- REPORT YOUR VOLUNTARY WORK
- REPORT YOUR ALLOWANCE
- ASK IF YOU ARE COVERED BY INSURANCE

VOLUNTEERING CAN OFFER MANY BENEFITS:

PRACTICAL



WHY?

- ▶ Meet **new people**.
- ▶ **Practise** your **Dutch**.
- ▶ **Help** other people.
- ▶ **Develop skills** that can help you in your job search.
- ▶ Add your volunteering **experience to your CV**.
- ▶ Get to know the **Flemish culture**.



WHAT?

Think about what you **like doing and what you are good at**.

Volunteering can be done in many ways:

- + cooking
- + doing chores
- + gardening
- + repairing bicycles
- + working with children or youngsters
- + helping with sports activities
- + helping with food distribution
- + guiding excursions
- + helping in an animal shelter
- ...

TIP:

Check if there are any **tasks** you absolutely **want to avoid**.

Maybe you are afraid of animals, Maybe there are things you would rather not do for religious or other reasons (e.g. serving alcohol).



WHERE?

Talk to

- » your social worker
- » your OCMW officer
- » your civic integration programme counsellor
- » your Dutch teacher
- » friends who are already volunteering



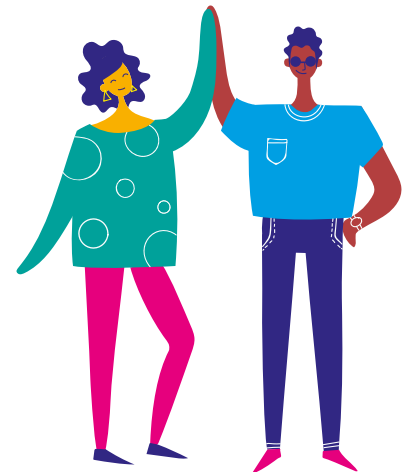
Also have a look at WWW.VRIJWILLIGERSWERK.BE

HOW?

Make **clear agreements** before starting your volunteering journey.

Ask for a description of your tasks and the way of working.

- ⊙ Which tasks can I perform?
- ⊙ Can I try first before deciding?
- ⊙ Where should I go and when?
- ⊙ What should I do if I cannot make it?
- ⊙ Who will I be working with?
- ⊙ Who is my contact person?
- ⊙ Do I get paid? If yes, how much?
- ⊙ Am I covered by insurance?



QUITTING?

There can be different reasons to quit volunteering (work schedule, lack of time, leaving, moving, etc.). Although you may find it difficult to announce your resignation, **notify the organisation of your departure**.

i LEARN MORE

www.arteveldehogeschool.be/vluchtvooruit



This checklist was developed with funds for Practice-Based Scientific Research (PWO) of Artevelde University College.

TO DO

- ✓ **MAKE CLEAR AGREEMENTS ABOUT YOUR TASKS AND WORK SCHEDULE**
- ✓ **NOTIFY THE ORGANISATION IF YOU CANNOT MAKE IT**