

Barcelona – European Volunteering Capital 2014

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Barcelona was designated to be the first city to hold the title of "[European Volunteering Capital](#)". This award is granted by an initiative of the European Volunteer Centre ([CEV](#)), an organization that aims to support volunteering by defending and promoting it. A jury made up of European celebrities with connections to volunteering assesses the nominations of the cities based on their performance against specified measures and recommendations from the [Policy Agenda for Volunteering in Europe \(PAVE\)](#). Special emphasis is put on proven capacity when it comes to promoting and enhancing inter-state mobility for volunteers.

The objective behind granting this status is to promote local-level volunteering by lending recognition to municipalities that offer support to and maintain close collaboration with **volunteering associations** and organization or those which promote altruism. To pursue this objective, the Commissioner for Citizen Participation and Associations of Barcelona, the [Generalitat \[regional government\] of Catalonia](#), [Catalan Federation of Social Volunteers \(FCVS\)](#), the [Federation of Volunteers of "La Caixa" \(FASVOL\)](#) have worked together, first to win the award for Barcelona, and once successful, as part of the organizing committee of the Capital together with other associations.

The cooperation of organizations, both at the time of winning the award when more than **one hundred of organizations and institutions supported the candidacy** and at the moment of providing content, has become evident through examples of organizations that have collaborated in activities realised in the capital. To provide some examples, we can mention a space in the city that brings together more than 500 organizations such as the "**Citizen's Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona**", a neighborhood association level as the "[Orlandai Cultural Association](#)", a professional association such as the "Official School of Industrial Engineers of Catalonia", sector-specific associations such as the "[Environmental Volunteer Network of Catalonia](#)", recently created associations like the "Catalan Association for the promotion of the Economy for the Common Good", associations with a great tradition like the "Barcelona coordinating entity of Giants" (a tradition of folklore) or corporate volunteers like the association of [DKV Seguros](#) (an Insurance company) corporate volunteers.

The agenda of the "Barcelona European Volunteering Capital" was composed by **64 activities** including, as an example of the diversity of activities, the celebration of the [2014 European Marketplace](#), the *Citizen Agora of the Social Barcelona*, the 1st Iberoamerican Conference of Corporate Volunteer, *the Exhibition of the Barcelona's Associations*, the 76th International Session Of The European Youth Parliament, the Environmental Volunteer Week, the Brotherhood meeting of Time Banks or the Conference of volunteerism worldwide.

Barcelona is the capital of technological and innovative events, such as the "[Mobile World Congress](#)" until 2018, the "European Capital of Innovation", the conference "City innovation summit", the "Smart City Expo World Congress", but is also able to show that it is the capital of the people.

Barcelona, with its role as "**European Volunteering Capital**", has been leading in **volunteering** and has helped to highlight its activities. This is vital for **social cohesion**, and provides values of **generosity, solidarity, commitment, effort, social responsibility and teamwork**.

For Barcelona, to carry the title "European Volunteering Capital" throughout this year has implied the recognition of the work that thousands of people realize in every neighborhood of our city. The assessment of the capital is therefore positive but should also serve to improve on all the projects, improve the training of volunteers, improve the transmission of values and never decline in the defense of their rights. Beyond this, it should help to ensure the strict compliance to the **Volunteer Charter of Catalonia**. All this is important, because the volunteer's commitment is a commitment to the society in general.

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Resum:

Carles Agustí, Commissioner for Citizen Participation and Associations of the City Council of Barcelona, values what the European Capital of Volunteering has been for Barcelona.

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