

Interview

Miloslav Klíma: "The #EVCapital 2019 is a chance to give recognition to the value of volunteers in Kosice and develop ways to support them"



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Kosice is hosting the European Volunteering Capital 2019.

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This city will host several major European and Global sports events in May, June and October.



Kosice has a vibrant community of volunteers.

Miloslav Klíma, member of Kosice 2019, talks about the aims and benefits of hosting the European Volunteering Capital 2019.

The European Volunteering Capital Kosice 2019 will be soon a reality. What are your aims?

We would like to publicly thank the volunteers in Kosice who contribute so much to improving the quality of life in Kosice with their selfless acts of kindness and solidarity. We also hope to encourage others to do the same, especially in the fields of health, education, sports, environment and social welfare.

What activities do you expect to do during this year?

We will have the opening and closing ceremonies in January and December respectively and other, smaller sector focussed events throughout the year such as for health, education, sports, environment and social welfare. We will also host several major European and Global sports events in May, June and October and for that we will engage many thousands of local volunteers and also those from other countries.

From your point of view, what will be the benefits for the city?

The benefits will be seen for the current volunteers, future volunteers and the whole population of Kosice. We will be able to give greater recognition to the value of volunteers in Kosice and develop ways to support them better and also facilitate more volunteering. We will do this by developing an even greater culture of volunteering in Kosice and in the development of a dedicated online matching service for volunteers searching for opportunities and initiatives and organisations needing volunteers.

What is the picture of the current state of volunteering in Kosice?

In our city, we have a vibrant community of volunteers engaging with many organizations and cooperating with the municipality, with Regional and national volunteer centres and with private, for-profit companies.

In your opinion, what do you think that Europe needs to make the difference in this field (volunteering)?

Europe needs to give greater emphasis to the importance of solidarity and the putting into actions of European values in our societies and communities. The European Solidarity Corps is a great step in this direction but this should be just the start of a coordinated and comprehensive volunteering strategy at the European level for people of all ages.

What is the value of volunteering for any society? What could you say to persuade new volunteers?

I would say volunteering can be understood as promoting fairness and justice, and as an expression of solidarity with others, all of which contributes to improving human quality of life. Volunteering and helping others can be an extremely empowering experience through the change-making impact of the energy, time and expertise that volunteers can give without any expectation of personal gain - although the personal gains such as a great sense of personal satisfaction and pride and 'feeling good', can be huge.

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