

## 2. Voluntary Activities

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**Volunteering of young people and volunteering in the field of work with Children and Youth have long tradition** in the Czech Republic. It is estimated that around a half of all volunteering activities in the country are done by young people and youth organisations.

**Volunteering is seen as part of a civil society ethos and role**, and thus the state does not regulate volunteering as such. There is legal regulation only on specific voluntary service activities. **No specific Youth volunteering public scheme** exists. There is also the historical aspect of abusing volunteering by the communist regime between 1948 and 1989 for ideological purposes of the Communist party and the Communist state.

However, for a long time the Czech NGO sector and youth NGOs have been very strongly motivated to improve the conditions for volunteering from the state, and have been calling for better recognition of volunteering and the introduction of benefits from the state for volunteering by individuals as well as on the level of voluntary organisations.

The public discussion on the Act on supporting volunteering thus started after the millennium and especially after the 2011 – The European Year of Volunteering, which was also promoted during the Czech EU Presidency within the Council of the EU in 2009. During the year 2011, many activities happened in the Czech Republic about volunteering, and state bodies started preparation on the proper legal matters. However, it was not possible to reach a general consensus in society and between various sectors and public policies. Therefore the **Government decided by the end of 2016 to stop the preparation of a separate legal Act on volunteering.**

**The state focused more on supporting the development of general volunteering and supportive regional infrastructure, and youth voluntary activities are thus supported within the state youth work schemes** and by regional, local and private actors.

The Czech Council of Children and Youth as an independent National Youth Council of most of the nationwide youth organisations, carried out the **mapping project SAFE**, monitoring and calculating the value and social benefit of the voluntary activities and work in the field of Youth, with very positive outcomes.

State Youth Policy also has been working on the **recognition and validation of skills** gained through volunteering and Non-Formal and Informal learning and some positive achievements have been reached (for details see [chapter 2.8](#)).