



PEPA- Peer Empowerment Programme for Achievement of Migrant Women

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1. INTRODUCTION

This questionnaire aims to get information about the state of the art of volunteering in partner countries. With that aim, partners have conducted interviews with 4 groups:

- Organisations currently involved in volunteering
- Organisations wishing to engage in volunteering
- Participants currently being involved in volunteering
- Participants wishing to engage in volunteering

The questionnaire was distributed in English both online (Google Forms) and offline (on paper).

The form was sent to organisations working with migrants, women's organisations, we also distributed the formulary to our contacts, as we work regularly with migrants and volunteers of different nationalities.

The surveys were distributed in April and May and the total number of respondents to all questionnaires was 34. The questionnaires were mainly answered by women, whose nationalities were Bulgarian.

2. PARTICIPANTS

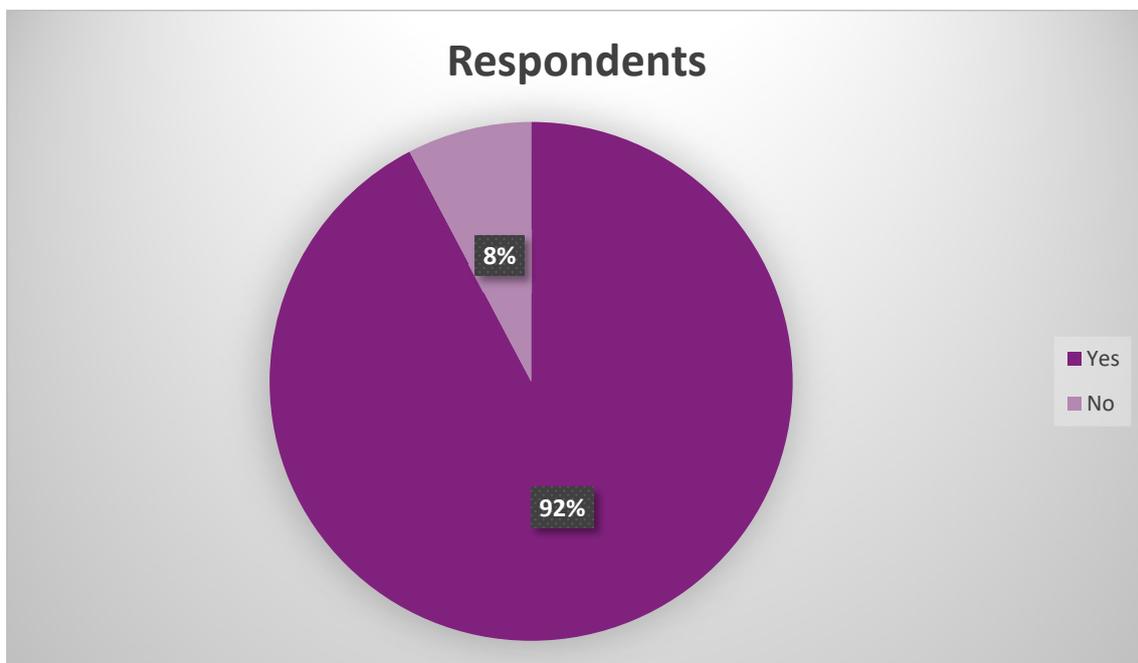
2.1 EXISTING PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

- The form was sent to **Participants currently being involved in volunteering.**

The answers obtained in the forms are summarised below.

1. **In your opinion, was it more difficult as a migrants / ethnic minority woman to access volunteering opportunities than the general public?**



To this question, 92% of the participants answered that it is more difficult for migrant or ethnic minority women to access volunteering opportunities.

The participants who answered “yes”, gave the following reasons:

- Language barrier
- Volunteering possibilities in Bulgaria tend to be less accessible for people who do not speak the language.

- In many cases, volunteering opportunities are known by people which are part of this type of network, which in most cases migrant women do not know how to access.
- There is a lack in regulations on how migrant women can access volunteering opportunities.
- There are many cultural differences, that migrant women have not yet learned. They are less likely to be fully integrated in the society.
- As they do not have as many opportunities, they are mostly reserved for the locals.
- Migrant women have many family responsibilities and because of that, they and many others are at a disadvantage, due to the lack of awareness of volunteer opportunities in Bulgaria
- There is almost no guidance or initiatives from the immigration office nor municipalities or government, which is not helpful for women.
- Due to the inequality and racial bias against migrants and ethnic minorities. Sadly, due to the media migrants are viewed as a negative person, thus we are much less likely to be chosen.

The participants who answered “no”, gave the following reasons:

- Because volunteering itself is making good for people or contribute for a good cause- that means that everyone, who want to join the cause is welcome - no matter the religion or the ethnic origin- the doors are fully open.

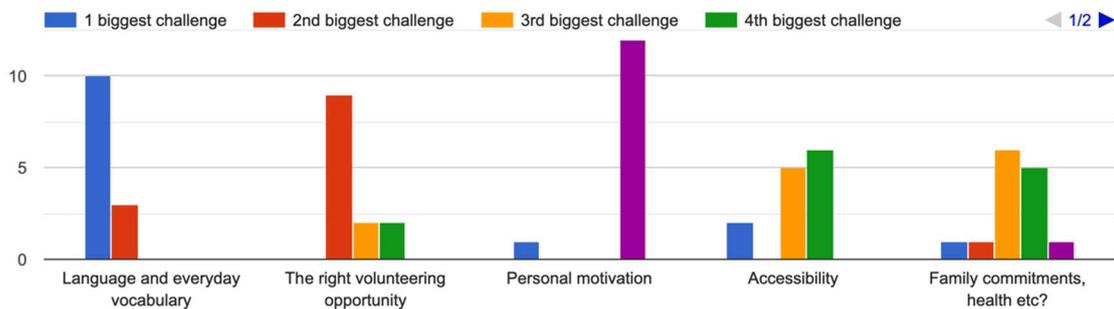
2. What was your main reason for wanting to access a volunteering opportunity?

- To provide help
- To do good for others
- To gain practical experiences
- For my CV
- Develop my language skills
- Learn about their challenges
- Guide women
- To do good for the society
- Networking, new opportunities

3. Please rank the key issues that were most difficult when accessing volunteering opportunity?

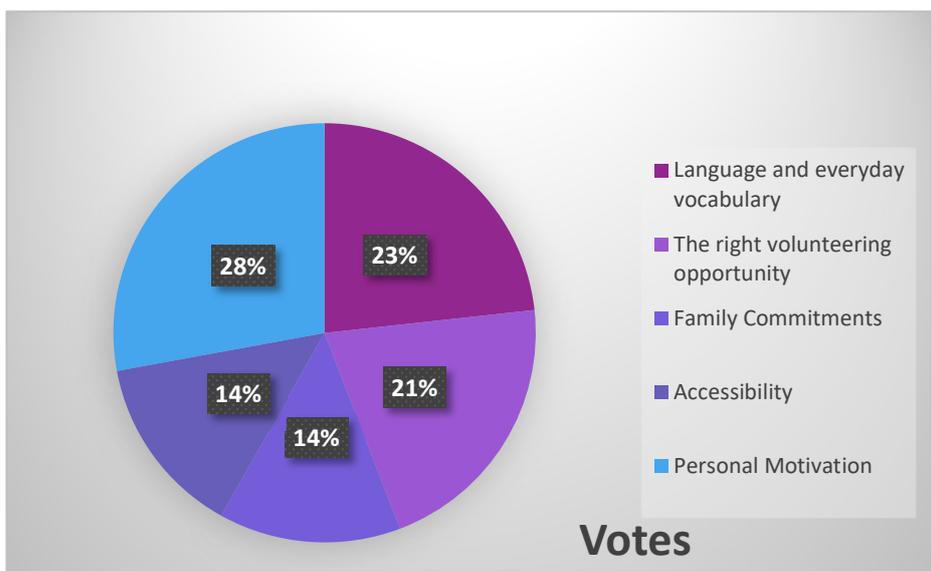
1 = biggest challenge, 2 = second biggest and so on...

- Language and everyday vocabulary
- The right volunteering opportunity
- Personal motivation
- Accessibility
- Family commitments, health etc?



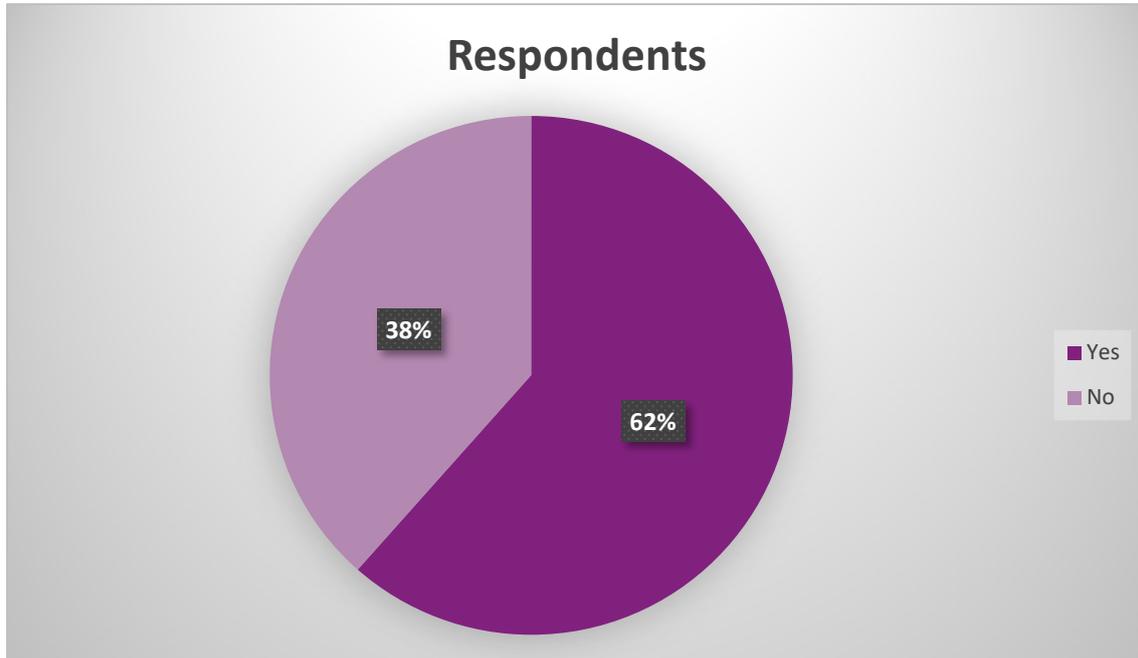
Above you can see the overview of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th biggest challenges.

In terms of language, the responses are clear that language and everyday vocabulary is the 1st biggest challenge. The 2nd biggest challenge is the right volunteering opportunity. The 3rd biggest challenge is the family commitments. The 4th biggest challenge is the accessibility. The 5th biggest challenge is considered the personal motivation.



The proportion of responses for each challenge is displayed in the chart.

4. Do you think it's harder for women to access volunteering than men?



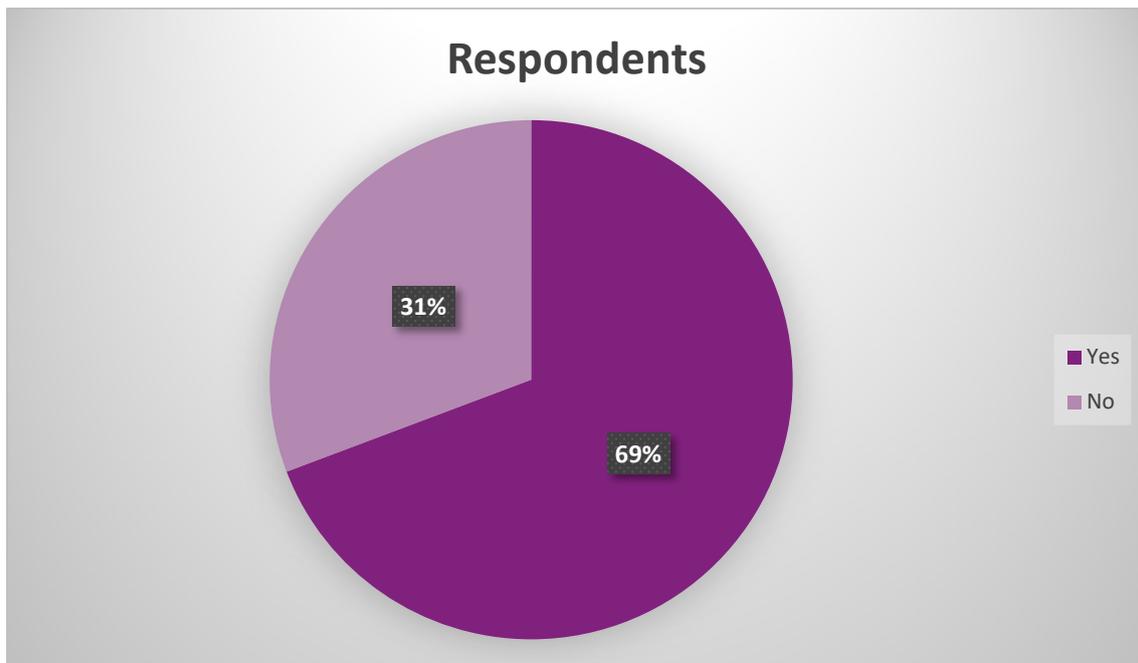
5. What aspect of volunteering was most important for you?

- The experience gained
- The intercultural aspect and making new contacts
- Learning the actual reasons, which has caused the problem or difficult situation, for which is made this volunteering cause. Is not just the need of support and help after-also is very important to understand and try to avoid in future- what is the real problem at the bottom of everything.
- The networking
- The actions that we took
- Bring good impact on the world.
- Helping people
- The team environment
- The motivation
- The volunteer group dynamics

6. How long was your volunteering opportunity?

The answers to this question are varied, from 6 months to 1 year or a couple of years. Some of them mention that it depends on the type of opportunity.

7. Is it important for you that your volunteering opportunity is accredited at the end?



69% of the respondents have answered “yes” to this question and 31% have answered “no”.

Some comments related to their responses were:

- That means that opportunity is recognized as an important and has a positive impact.
- I would want to put it on my CV
- Not important but nice to have

8. Tell us about any good practices that you have seen? Please explain why you consider them as good practice(s)?

- The Bulgarian Christmas- cause, held every year- for the kids, without families, for the kids in need- it's a very good practice because of the cyclicity, because of the participation of different, interesting people- gathered for the good of the children.
- Creating awareness around the content

- To teach children how to sing Bulgarian songs for children
- Women are emotional a lot and their human values are consistent no matter of their culture and religion.

9. What would a good volunteering opportunity look like for you?

- You take part in many activities and are involved with different people and organisations.
- Includes many and different (based on gender, religion, ethnic origin, quality of life and so on) people- each of them possitive and determined to achieve best possible results; an opportunity, which has an open end- for subsequent events, carring the good practice.
- Where I have room for giving my creative ideas
- With regulated access and rules and the support of the relevant authorities.

2.2 NEW PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

- The form was sent to **Participants wishing to engage in volunteering**

The answers to the questions are summarized below:

1. In your opinion, is it more difficult for migrants / ethnic minority women to access volunteering opportunities than the general public?

100% of the participants answered "yes"

Among the reasons for this opinion are:

- Due to language and communicational barriers
- Volunteering is not popular
- They don't know where to find
- In Bulgaria it's not possible
- I think they do not have the required language skills for participation
- Bulgaria is not well developed when discussing migrant topics
- Because they do not know many other women of migrant backgrounds
- They are not fully integrated in the culture
- Lack of guidance on how they can do this properly
- Lack of network & confidence

2. What would be your motivation for wanting to access a volunteering opportunity?

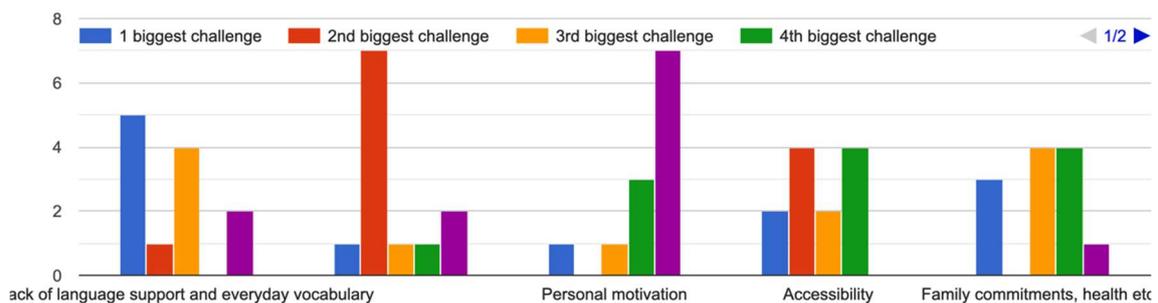
- I want to participate in international projects
- I need multicultural experience
- To make easy life for migrants that's will help all society
- To meet international participants and make new contact
- To build my network
- To learn more about the migrant community
- I think it would be great to get to know women migrants and their challenges
- To learn

- To gain practice experience on their culture
- Experience
- To help
- Raise awareness

3. Please rank the key issues that, in your view, that would stop you from accessing volunteering opportunity.

1 = biggest challenge, 2 = second biggest and so on...

- Lack of language support and everyday vocabulary
- Relevance of the opportunity
- Personal motivation
- Accessibility
- Family commitments, health etc?



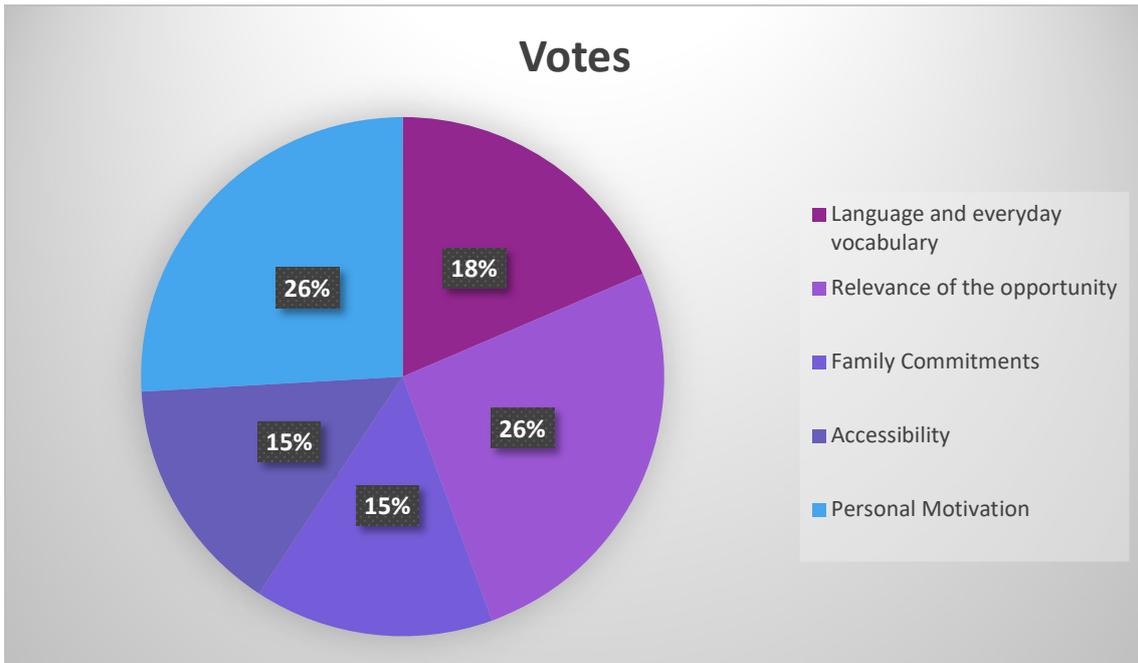
Above you can see the overview of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th biggest challenges.

In terms of language, the responses are clear that language and everyday vocabulary is the 1st biggest challenge.

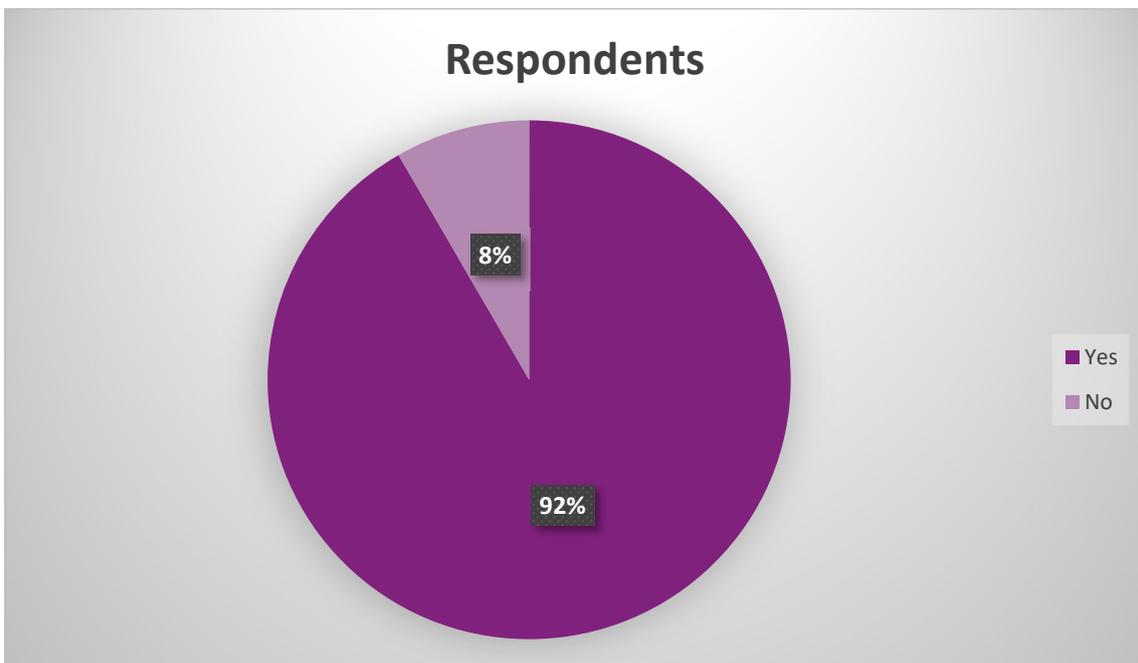
The 2nd biggest challenge is the relevance of the opportunity.

The 3rd biggest challenge is the family commitments, though the results are conflicting. Family commitments can also be interpreted as the 4th biggest challenge. However, for the purpose of ranking the 4th biggest challenge is the accessibility and the 5th biggest challenge is considered the personal motivation.

The proportion of responses for each challenge is displayed in the chart below.



4. Do you think it's harder for women to access volunteering than men?



It can be observed that only one participant did not agree to this statement.

5. What aspect of volunteering would be most important to you? e.g. practical hands-on experience, qualification?

- Motivation
- Communicate with different kind of people practical experience teaching new things
- Qualification language training
- To learn new things for different country to learn new language to have practice in collaboration and supporting poor people
- Both hands on experience and qualifications
- The networking experience
- The network we will build and support we will provide
- The hands on experience
- Experience, no need for certification, there to help others
- To help, the value of my presence & the experience I gain

6. Ideally, how long should a volunteering opportunity be and is it important for you that you get accreditation at the end?

The answers vary from 6 months to 2 years. Regarding accreditation, for most of them is not necessary but important to have. Some comments related to the accreditations stated:

- it's important to get accreditation
- will be good if I get accreditation

7. Tell us about any good practices that you have seen? Please explain why you consider them as good practice(s)?

- I think that we didn't have I don't know
- I know for some girls that have friends from Syria and help them
- Caritas

8. What would a good volunteering opportunity look like for you?

- To have chance to help
- To assist young women like me to adapt here and study new things
- To meet 2-3 times per week with migrant and help them in every situation
- To help younger girls to learn Bulgarian and teach them some creative National traditions like dancing "horoscope"
- To help give them my knowledge on Bulgarian culture
- Where I can interact with women that are motivated to make an impact

3. ORGANISATIONS

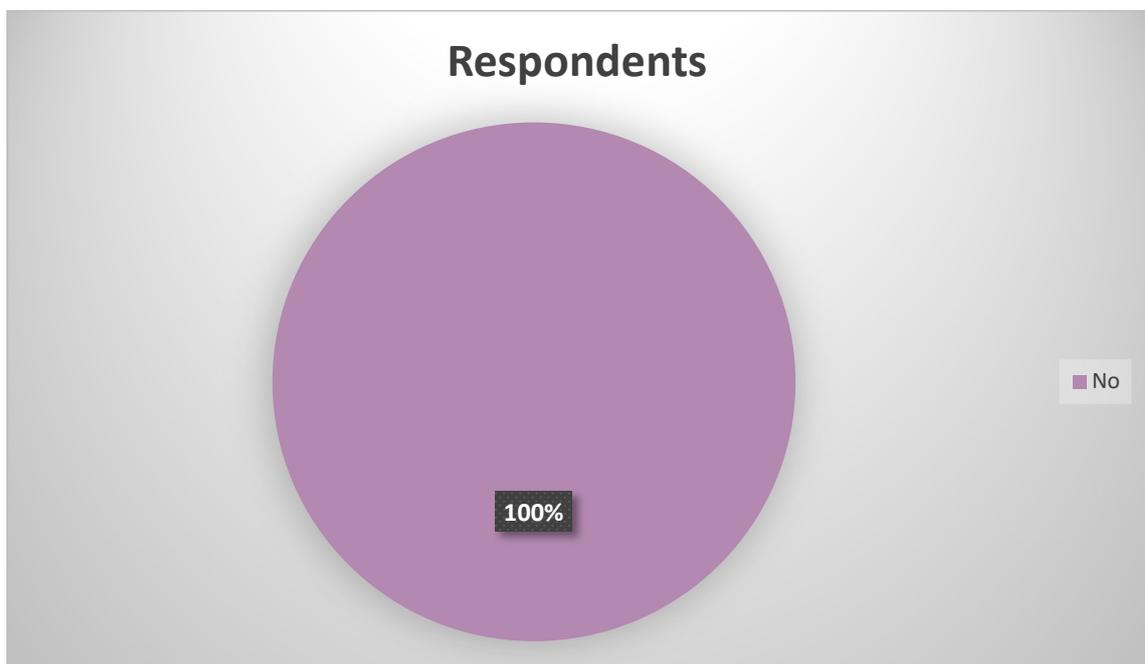
3.2 EXISTING ORGANISATIONS

To obtain relevant information, **organisations currently involved in volunteering** and with migrant women were asked to fill in the research questions. There are not many organisation that do these types of activities. We managed to find two organisations that contributed to the research:

- Goodeeds Initiative
- Neterra

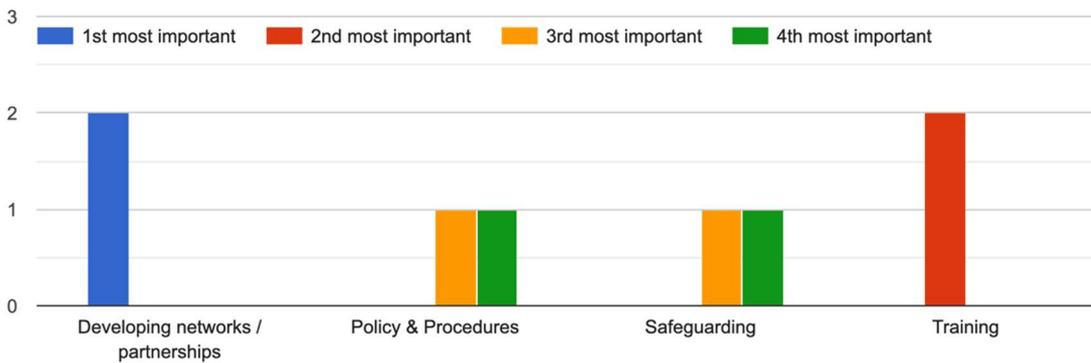
The answers to the questions are summarized as follows:

1. **In your opinion, is it more difficult for migrants / ethnic minority women to access volunteering opportunities than the general public?**



2. Please rank the following that is most helpful in setting up a volunteering programme for migrant / ethnic minority women? 1 = most important, 2 = next most important and so on...

- Developing networks/partnerships
- Policy & Procedures
- Safeguarding
- Training



100% of the respondents developing networks and partnerships is the most important factor for a successful volunteering program.

Training is very important for 100% of the respondents and is their second most important in ranking.

Regarding policy and procedures, the opinions are divided. For 50% it is the 3rd most important factor and for the other 50% if the 4th.

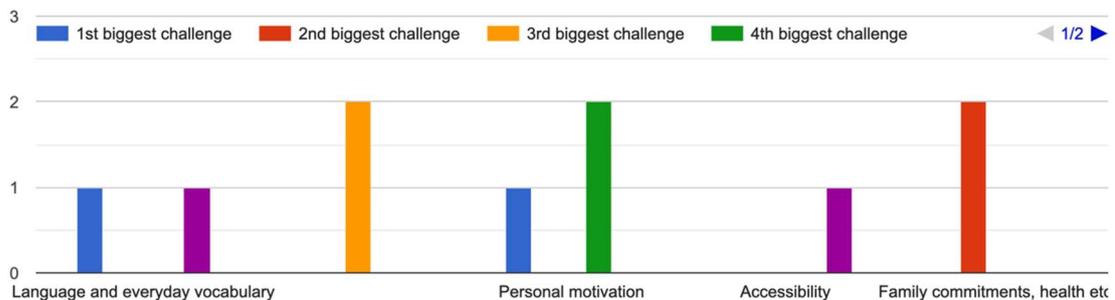
Regarding safeguarding, the opinions are similar to the policy and procedures, meaning that, for 50% it is the 3rd most important factor and for the other 50% if the 4th.

3. Please rank the key issues that, in your view, migrant/ethnic minority women face when trying to access volunteering opportunities?

1 = biggest challenge, 2 = second biggest and so on...

- Language and everyday vocabulary
- Relevant opportunity
- Personal motivation
- Accessibility
- Family commitments, health etc?

Please rank the key issues that, in your view, migrant / ethnic minority women face when trying to access volunteering opportunities?



For 50% of the respondent's language and everyday vocabulary is considered in the 1st, while for the remaining 50% it is the biggest challenge. Family commitments and health are the 2nd biggest challenge where 100% of the participants are aligned.

For 100% of the respondents, a relevant opportunity is the third challenge. Personal motivation is the 4th challenge. Regarding accessibility, only 50% of the participants voted and therefore it is seen as the 5th challenge.

4. What aspect of volunteering is most important to a migrant learner?

- Access to possible volunteering causes
- Volunteering to prevent depression

5. Ideally, how long should a volunteering opportunity be and is it important for your service users to get accredited qualifications?

- It depends on their age: for younger people - longer (about a month) to get into networks and to gain necessary skills, for adults - shorter (maximum a week) - because of the family and work constraints which might appear in longer volunteering engagement
- Several months and yes it is not always necessary, but it is important.

6. Tell us about any good practices that you have used or seen? Please explain why you consider them as good practice(s)?

- Developing and maintaining a youth corner in a small country town - it was created by young Roma girls and was open to the whole community. The young volunteers cleaned the place along a town-crossing river, mobilizes community to build benches and a shelter and do different informal cultural and community activities for young people (irrespective of their ethnic background) from the town. I think this is a good practice as it was initiated by Roma youth, which usually are not active in volunteering actions, and was open to the entire community - thus breaking with prejudices in the society that Roma people cannot do good deeds.
- To have clear defined goals and to measure success on regular basis.

7. Which specific skills and competencies should PEPA develop for practitioners to increase the levels of migrants / ethnic minority women in volunteering?

- Self-awareness, networking skills and ability to mobilize communities
- Networking skills and emotional intelligence

8. Tell us what was/is the greatest challenge in setting up a volunteering/peer support programme?

- Lack of initial funding to set up such programme and to promote it
- Building personal motivation.

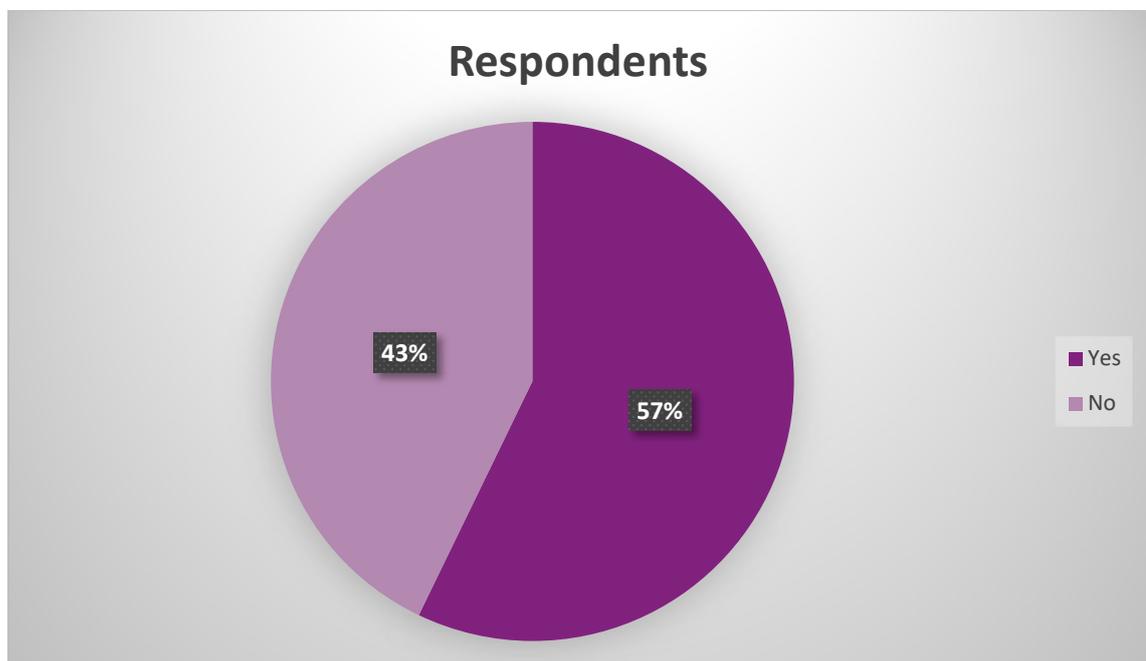
3.2 NEW ORGANISATION

To obtain relevant information, **organisations wishing to engage in volunteering** and with migrant women were asked to fill in the research questions. There are not many organisation that do these types of activities. We managed to find seven organisations that contributed to the research, four of them chose to remain anonymous. The three that shared their data with us are the following:

- European Development Foundation
- ARTIED - Creativity and Educational Studio
- NetIX

The answers to the questions are summarized as follows:

1. **In your opinion, is it more difficult for migrants / ethnic minority women to access volunteering opportunities than the general public?**



For 57% of the respondents, it is more difficult for migrants and ethnic minority women to access volunteering opportunities.

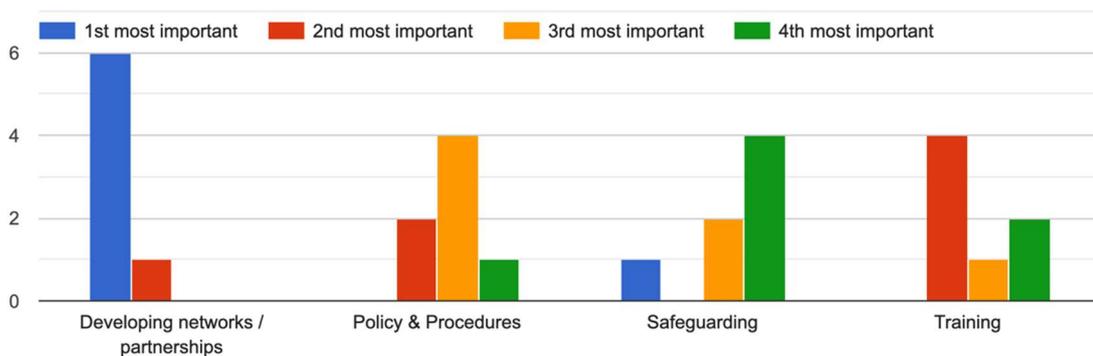
If Yes, why is this the case?

The main reasons given were usually related to migrants not being fluent in the language of the host country.

2. Please rank the following that would be most helpful in helping you to set up a volunteering programme for migrant / ethnic minority women?

1 = most important, 2 = next most important and so on...

- Developing networks / partnerships
- Policy & Procedures
- Safeguarding
- Training

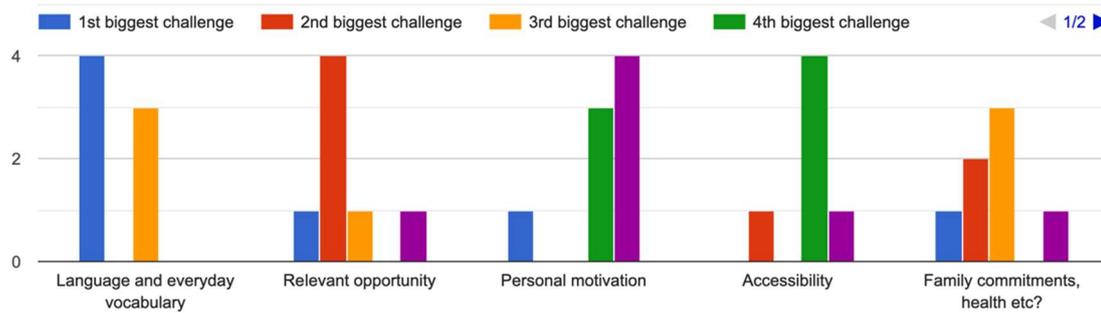


For the majority (6) of the respondents, developing networks and partnerships are the most important thing for setting up a volunteering program. Regarding training, it seen as the second most important. Policy and procedures are less important and are considered the 3rd most important, followed by safeguarding being the least important.

3. Please rank the key issues that, in your view, migrant/ethnic minority women face when trying to access volunteering opportunities?

1 = biggest challenge, 2 = second biggest and so on...

- Language and everyday vocabulary
- Relevant opportunity
- Personal motivation
- Accessibility
- Family commitments, health etc?



For all of the respondent's language and everyday vocabulary is considered in the 1st, and biggest challenge. For 100% of the respondents, a relevant opportunity is the second biggest challenge. Family commitments and health are the 3rd biggest challenge. Accessibility is the 4th biggest challenge, followed by personal motivation, which is considered the 5th biggest challenge.

4. What aspect of volunteering in your views would be most important to a migrant learner?

- To teach them every day language
- Networking skills
- Providing a sense of purpose
- To let them get to understand our culture and language
- Their opportunity to feel heard
- Something that will help them get the better job
- The language and the culture of the volunteer group

5. Ideally, how long should a volunteering opportunity be and is it important for your service users to get accredited qualifications?

Answers vary between 2 months and 2 years. Hereby some of the comments by the participants:

- For younger people - at least a month - to gain necessary skills; for adults - a week, as for longer volunteering experiences they might find family or work-related constraints, which might affect their participation
- 1 year minimal, I mean literally the bare minimum. Preferable 2 years. And in my opinion it is important that they get acknowledged by their good work, but the ones that are not motivated and just filling hours shouldn't get it, but that is my personal opinion.

6. Tell us about any good practices that you have used or seen? Please explain why you consider them as good practice(s)?

- Some foundation have some initiatives but not for migrants women
- ARTIED did not participated in any volunteering activities so far but wants to start such. So, we cannot share any good practice at this stage.
- All volunteer roles should provide volunteers with high levels of satisfaction, and the chance to gain new or enhance existing skills and experiences.
- Talking with the persons and try to motivate them to grow and learn more whilst also enjoy it.
- CV building skills can help migrant women present themselves better on the job market

7. Which specific skills and competencies should PEPA develop for practitioners to increase the levels of migrants / ethnic minority women in volunteering?

- Tolerance and how to work with low educated people
- Networking and community mobilisation skills
- Working with ethical groups and having in mind their differences.
- Make it more of a inviting system for us
- Cultural Awareness
- Personal branding of migrant women
- Language skills and cultural awareness

8. Tell us what is the greatest challenge you foresee in setting up a volunteering/peer support program?

- Financial support
- Seed funding to set up such programme and to promote it
- Motivating more people to participate.
- I feel like that dog that keeps all the sheep in place at big farms. Sometimes it can be hard but I guess with the right people around you everything is possible.
- Finding volunteers
- Finding volunteers of migrant background