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REPORT ON TRENDS
AND INNOVATION IN
**CORPORATE
VOLUNTEERING**

December 2017

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For years now corporate volunteering has been consolidated all around the world through a process that has evolved at different rhythms, with some relevant milestones such as "2011, European Year of Volunteering", which considerably bolstered this social phenomenon in Europe. Currently, it is safe to say that corporate volunteering is firmly implemented and shows important prospects of success.

In what direction is corporate volunteering evolving?

In order to answer this question, Voluntare has set up an area of innovation, the goal of which is to analyse what are the main trends and in what direction corporate volunteering is evolving. An information of great value for those organisations that need to make strategic decisions in their corporate volunteering programmes.

The first product generated in the aforementioned area is the present document: "Report On Trends And Innovation In Corporate Volunteering", which has been elaborated following two sources of information:

» Primary source: a questionnaire submitted to 14 authorities in corporate volunteering from all around the world.

» Secondary source: studies and reports on corporate volunteering originating from different geographical places. (Latin America, United States, Canada, Europe and Australia) which reflect a global reality. Through these analysis we aim to contrast the information obtained by the experts.

Through the combination of both sources of information, a series of defining trends will be established and periodically analysed by the department of Voluntare for the purpose of monitoring the evolution of corporate volunteering.

"

The present report is a tool of great value for those organisations looking to make strategic decisions on their corporate volunteering programmes.

What did the experts find?

A crucial element when defining in what direction corporate volunteering is evolving and what is considered an innovative volunteering programme is that of identifying key organisations in their past, present and future development, and subsequently lay the matter in question.

Some of these organisations are public institutions such as the United Nations, volunteering networks such as IAVE, the European Volunteer Center, IMPACT2030 or even Voluntare itself. Academic authorities such as Bea Boccalandro have also taken part, just as private enterprises like Telefonica, IBM or KPMG. In particular, the consulted organisations are the following:

All these organisations have been invited to reflect upon five issues which allow us to obtain an accurate assessment of the current and future situation regarding corporative volunteering.

» Features of innovative programmes.

» Aspects which are becoming obsolete in these programmes.

» Trends expected in the next 10 years.

» Key actions to maximise theimpact of corporate volunteering.

» Challenges we will face in the next 5 years.

Thanks to their input and ideas, combined with the ones obtained from the secondary sources, we can imagine how the future of corporate volunteering will be shaped, and use it as a compass when revising our strategies.

Below we present the main conclusions devised by the experts, integrated into a group form. We will also highlight some key thoughts which will help us reach our goal.

1/ What are the three most innovative features in corporate volunteering that are being developed in your country or other countries?

On this matter, authorities agree that the most innovative volunteering corporate programmes are those which are aligned with the business and which also take into account volunteering as a tool for employee management.

There is also concurrence when underscoring some aspects such as the high involvement of employees, volunteering programmes which seek collaboration with other businesses, and a high use of ICTs.

On the other hand, we believe it is relevant to note other initiatives which provide wider perspective despite not being predominant in the above study. A good example is "Job Purposing" a concept promoted by Bea Boccolandro: employees volunteer to carry out activities for the common good while performing their regular job activities (i.e. HP's "Eco Advocates" who volunteer for training to promote green options to clients, or Linked IN's call centre in the UK where employees volunteer to make thank you calls to charities when call volume is low and Tata Consultancy Services which has corporate social responsibility "Champions" who, with the help of department heads, energize their local region and employees around CSR events and ensure that the largest business accounts have a local point of contact to engage.)

Companies aim to create agents of change, or employee activists. Above offering employees volunteering activities, some innovative programs also help employees become leaders and agents of change. To achieve this goal it is essential to empower employees so that they can develop, lead and promotevolunteering in local markets which are aligned with the company's priorities. The most innovative compa-

nies seek creative ways to encourage all types of employees to get involved with community initiatives, often leveraging their staff members' unique skills and experiences, who engage further with the company's broader efforts.

An additional relevant aspect highlighted by the experts is Custom-crafted causes: Today's innovative programmes don't merely offera list of traditional causes to choose from in art, education, and health. Instead, some companies craft specific causes that they are well-suited to support. An example would be the **Be Fearles be Kind** programme designed by Hasbro,which promotes children's empathy towards people who are different, and encouragesthem to adopt more inclusive attitudes by supporting friends or schoolmates who are "different".

We believe it is also pertinent to mention the idea of using   "multi-faceted" investments to make a bigger social impact in communities. Multi-faceted investments are defined as those which provide support to communities through philanthropic giving, charity work, in-kind goods and/or multi-year pledges of support. On average, 43% of the most community-minded companies in the United States provide this kind of multidimensional support to community partners. Volunteering is thus being seen as a 'tool' within Community Investment and helps businesses meet commercial challenges such as building relationships in communities, bringing forth learnings and new perspectives on customers/communities. Coordination and collaboration with other partners is critical. Thus, the insertion of corporate volunteering into local economic development strategies that create those synergies should be promoted.

"Companies with innovative volunteering programmes search for revolutionary ways to encourage employees to become involved in these programmes, a concept known as "activist employee".

Chart 1 /
Most frequent responses on the key features of an innovative volunteering programme.

High involvement of employees

Collaboration between businesses

Aligned with the business

Key element to manage employees

High use of ICTs

High social impact

3   3
3
3
5   5

2/ Which two aspects of corporate volunteering will become obsolete or less popular in the next 10 years?

From a different perspective, we were interested in identifying which trends have been considered obsolete or are expected to lose prominence in the next 10 years. In this sense, experts agree that corporate volunteering programmes which are solely focused on a business impact, setting aside the social aspect, are expected to drop. Additionally, volunteering programmes based on assistance services (which don't provide a true added value to social institutions) are also expected a low prospect, as are one-off initiatives or sporadic actions.

Almost all the consulted authorities agreed that we have outgrown the insistence by some that volunteering is perfectly altruistic (everyone seems to agree now that it's acceptable for volunteering to serve the company).Currently, it is considered a strategic need and a requirement from certain interest groups, mainly employees, and in a more intensified manner, from the

youngest members of the communities.

Similarly, the adverse effect is also considered to have been surpassed. In other words, corporate "greenwashing" or volunteering efforts that have alimited social impact, but are designed to make the company look good from a marketing perspective, are rapidly losing their credibility. Employees increasingly expect corporate initiatives to be connected with a long-term strategy and to be meaningful to community partners. Millennials want to see that their "doing good" matters.

Chart 2 /
Most frequent responses with regard to corporate volunteering programmes' obsolescence.

- Very sporadic volunteering
- Initiatives based on assistance services
- Volunteering which only aims to impact the company's business

2

6

3

> " According to experts, we have outgrown the concept of volunteering as something nice some companies do with their employees. Now it is astrategic necessity and a requirement from certain interest groups.

3/
Could you mention three trends that will become prominent in the next 10 years?

In an attempt to identify and stipulate the main trends expected for the next decade of corporate volunteering, experts acknowledge that volunteering is a key element in strategic employee management (human resources policies) as well as in the search for a maximum social impact. The combination of both trends would mark the success of volunteering programmes of the next decade.

Experts also pointed out a higher usage of ICTs in these programmes, in addition to the collaboration between companies to maximise social impact and business. One example is UNV new strategy to engage corporate volunteers on its online volunteers platform. Additionally, expertstargetedthe connection between volunteering and the goal to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDS), materialised in initiatives such as IMPACT 2030.
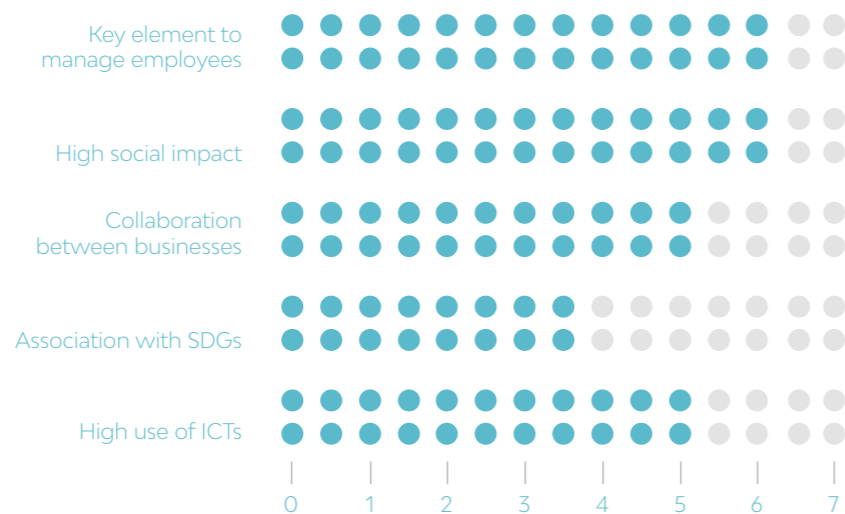
Another highlighted trend by experts is that of programmes which are conceived for employees to realise their own "career" or evolution through volunteer work. In this way, a

person who carries out volunteering at the company could evolve towards that concept of anagent of change or "activist employee" we examined earlier.

As we can observe in the chart, experts noted the use of tools such as Big Data as a way to service the management and strategy of corporate volunteering programmes. Moreover, experts referred to the tendency to consider volunteering as one more link in the strategy towards sustainability, perfectly integrated with the rest of the tools, helping to generate a significant impact on communities on a long-term basis.

As a last consideration, a special mention is made to the support that the public sector is expected to make on companies and NGOs in order to promote corporate volunteering. As an example, authorities noted that last year, the UK government aimed to prompt employers to granttheir workers 3 volunteering days a year. This measure hasn't come into effect but has spurred more companies to offer employee volunteering days.

"
Experts predict a higher use of ICTs in volunteering programmes, as well as collaborations between companies in order to maximise impact on society and business.

Chart 3 /
Most frequent answers with regard to the most effective trends in innovative corporate volunteering.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Key element to manage employees								
High social impact								
Collaboration between businesses								
Association with SDGs								
High use of ICTs								

4/

Could you indicate three key features in corporate volunteering aimed to maximise social impact?

A high impact on society coupled with an impact on business is thus considered a crucial requirement in the next decade's corporate volunteering. It is then essential to identify the key features which will achieve this effect. In this sense, authorities emphasized the importance of establishing strategic alliances with social entities as a first step in the desired direction.

Secondly, they underscored the need for these strategies to reflect that the main goal is precisely to maximise the social impact, in other words, to make it visible. From there, other factors emerged such as adequate training in corporate volunteering, the volunteers' awareness of the social needs in which they work,social impact strategies that adhere to what the company does (aligned to the business), acollaboration between companies and the measurement of the true impact generated by their volunteering programmes.

With regard to other relevant opinions, some experts place emphasis on the volunteer and their capacity to act with determination and effectiveness when tackling social issues. In this sense the training of volunteers, as we can

see in the chart, together with their empowerment, become key features as well.

Also relevant is the need to approach corporate volunteering as a broader social movement rather than a programme. The starting premise is to recognise that programmes are a mechanism to achieve something, but social movements are about lasting change. If we are able to see, understand and design our strategy according to this perspective, we will achieve a bigger impact.

Moreover, corporate volunteering offers a great opportunity for overcoming the cliché of a group of "privileged people" helping a group of "underprivileged people". According to experts, we must move beyond simply "helping the homeless" to fully understanding their situation and recognising the issue as something that affects us as well. Because we are one united group – even if some are affected more tragically than others. This change in mentality shifts the equation from people merely helping others to citizens understanding that we are all one large community. We are all part of the problem, but also of the solution.

> " Corporate volunteering provides a great opportunity to outgrow the cliché of a group of "privileged people" who help a group of "underprivileged people". We are all part of the problem, as well as part of the solution.

Chart 4 /

Most frequent responses with regard to themaximisation of impact generated by corporatevolunteering
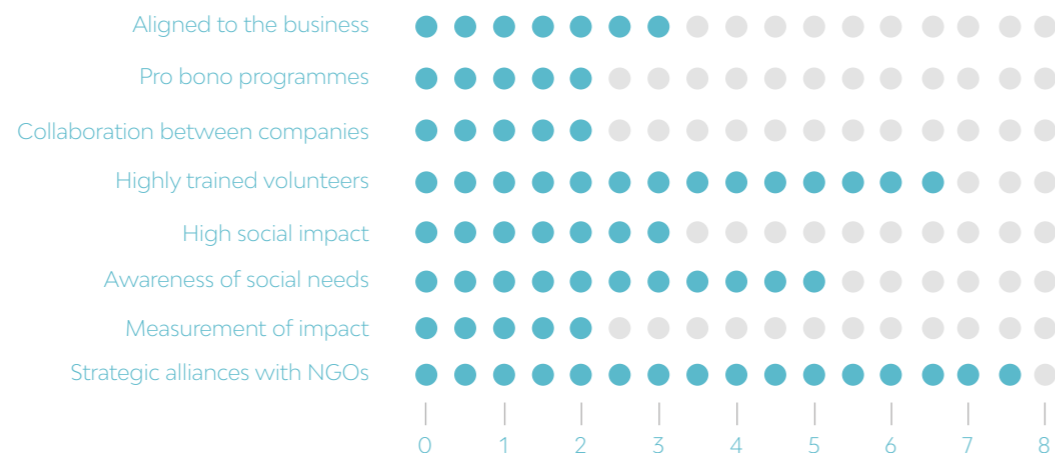
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Aligned to the business									
Pro bono programmes									
Collaboration between companies									
Highly trained volunteers									
High social impact									
Awareness of social needs									
Measurement of impact									
Strategic alliances with NGOs									

5/

What are the three main challenges that corporate volunteering must face in the next 5 years?

Lastly, we were interested in identifying the challenges that companies would face in short and long-term. In this sense, authorities stressed that the main challenge is to accomplish a real, visible social impact, a goal considered key for the next decade. They highlighted how accurately measuring the impact generated, both in a social and business sense, poses a great test. Additionally, collaborating with other companies in joined projects appears difficult. They also emphasised the professionalisation in the management of corporate volunteering programmes as a significant challenge. Lastly, empowering social entities also proves complex– the issue lies in preparing these social institutions to achieve that joint social impact side by side.

Other ideas targeted the importance of understanding volunteers better through more thorough investigations, as well as connecting with areas of knowledge such as neuroscience or theories of social identity. We must insist that real change begins in individuals, not systems and legislation. The Shared Value approach will work but only alongside a focus on helping people experience new realities and change their minds.

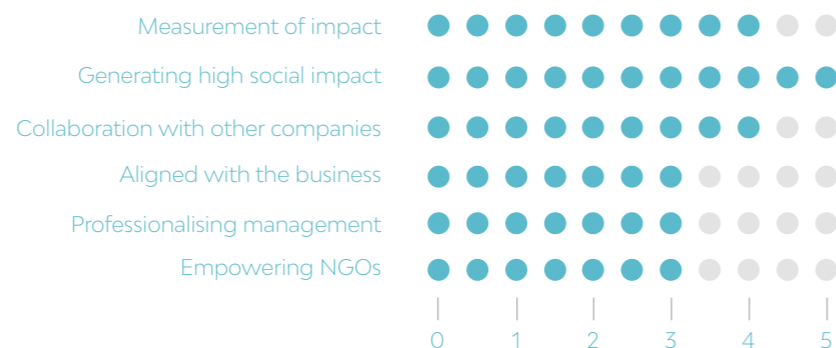Another challenge they considered relevant is the decline in global trust levels in business and government. However, this is also an opportunity for companies to rebuild trust by engaging strategically and authentically with communities. It also means building genuine, true cultures of community engagement and volunteering at companies – from ground floor to top floor.

From a more internal point of view, authorities highlighted the possibility that corporate volunteering may not be perceived as a strategic element, and instead considered something "nice to have" rather than a necessary plan for the company. This is a recurring issue in our field, as corporate volunteering constantly needs to prove itself as a valued addition to the business, especially when integrated between key departments such as HR, CSR and Public Affairs. If we are capable of demonstrating its value, our employee volunteering schemes will be considered something strategic and will thus receive respect, support and funding. We must outgrow the concept of corporate volunteering being merely a nice contribution and instead view it as a crucial tactical venture.

Finally, we must also take into account the challenge of adapting programmes and volunteering opportunities to new environments and ways of work, such as telework or new flexible working formulas in contrast to the more traditional model of 8-hour office shifts.

Chart 5 /
Most frequent responses with regard to corporate volunteering challenges

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Measurement of impact						
Generating high social impact						
Collaboration with other companies						
Aligned with the business						
Professionalising management						
Empowering NGOs						

> "
> We must regain trust in society, especially after a crisis that has not only been economic but also of values and credibility. Because of this, corporate volunteering programmes must be real, credible and of high impact.

> Everything considered superficial and artificial eventually turns against the companies and the employees themselves will be the ones to denounce it.

It is not only an aware and sensitised generation but one that is informed and connected through social media. Now more than ever, if employees are not tasked with something real and authentic, they will know, and the effect could be counterproductive. In what regards the companies, corporate volunteering is presented as a fabulous ally to attract and retain talent – although we must stress the fact that these strategies of participation must be real and credible. Anything considered superficial or artificial eventually turns against the companies, and the employees themselves will be the ones to denounce it.

Now more than ever, it is paramount to align company goals, employee concerns and social needs: that is the key and the sole way to create truly strategic corporate volunteering programmes with a long-term vision. Up until very recently, many volunteering programmes lacked either a social dimension or an employment one that appeared relevant enough. Therefore we found cases in which employees were not attracted by the programme or employees that did not consider the volunteer activities to be credible or useful. Today cases like these are not sustainable and it is necessary to find a balance between the three dimensions. This vision was also shared by the authorities consulted through the questionnaires.

SECONDARY SOURCES

In order to contrast and complete the information obtained through experts, we have selected several studies and reports from different geographical scopes to analyse the current situation of corporate volunteering in their own particular areas of action. We have especially focused on sources of information that allow us to visualise trends, keys to success and challenges of corporate volunteering, rather than concentrating on other aspects.

One of the topics which currently draws more attention is the effect that corporate volunteering has on its new generations of employees – Millennials. Never has a generation of employees arrived with higher demands and expectations for their employers with regard to the social roles they expect to carry out and the need to identify with the organisations in which they work.

Chart 6 /
Geographical origin of
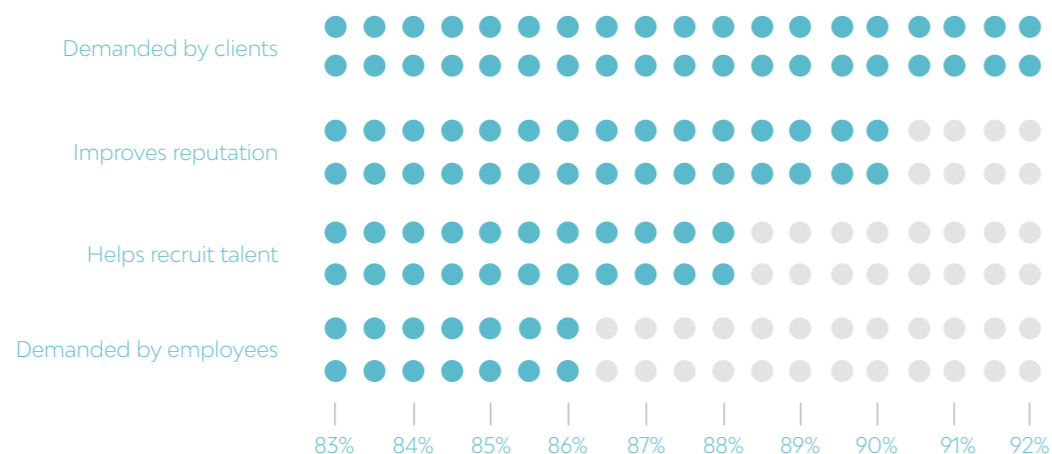analysed studies

Source: prepared by the authors.

SECONDARY SOURCES

In reference to the trends shown in some of the studies, through **Snapshot 2015's Top 6 Trends, the New Corporate DNA** we can identify some of them according to the results derived from past questionnaires made to American companies during the year 2013 and 2015. Some of the more relevant tendencies are as follows:

» There is a considerable amount of companies that offer corporate volunteering programmes for their employees, rising from 68% in 2013 to 92% in 2015. The number of SMEs offering volunteering programmes represents 60% of the companies surveyed. Therefore volunteering continues to grow significantly.

» Increasingly more companies offer all year round volunteering opportunities rather than just during specific periods. (38% in 2013 compared to 60% in 2015) In other words, long-term programmes are consolidating in contrast to those short-term. This strategy is aligned with the need to offer volunteering programmes that reach the highest social impact possible, as experts claimed was desirable.

» Continuously more businesses combine their volunteering programmes with donation campaigns and fundraising among their employees, and synergies between these events are sought after. The goal is to integrate volunteering in the context of sustainability strategies and investment in the community rather than consider it detached and on the sidelines.

» The study also claims that gradually more companies offer their employees volunteering opportunities abroad.

» In what regards management of internal communication, 28% of surveyed companies in 2013 allowed their employees to post pictures or testimonials of their social activities. The number is almost doubled in 2015 (51%) since it is considered a necessary strategy for involving more employees. This trend will increase inasmuch as more millennials start working for the company, and consequently volunteering managers must make the most of it.

» What about NGOs? According to the study, in 2013 a large number of NGOs claimed that they felt somewhat obligated to "use" corporate volunteers in order to maintain their alliances with companies. In 2015 this number is reduced, and increasingly more NGOs consider that corporate volunteers generate value by themselves. In any case, it is still a relatively low number and thus is identified as a barrier. As experts predict, establishing alliances in a medium to long-term basis between companies and NGOs will aid the latter to see a greater value in corporate volunteering.

» When analysing the main internal effects of corporate volunteering programmes and the social participation of its members, the study shows that 92% of companies claim that these schemes were demanded by their clients, 88% stated that it helped them recruit talent, 86% affirmed that their own employees demanded such programmes and 90% reported that its effects were very positive for their reputation.

Chart 7 /
Main internal effects of corporate volunteering and social participation of employees

Demanded by clients

Improves reputation

Helps recruit talent

Demanded by employees

83% 84% 85% 86% 87% 88% 89% 90% 91% 92%

MOBILISATION AND PARTICIPATION IN CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMMES

aking into account the experts' opinion and other data analysed, it is safe to claim one of the greatest challenges companies face when consolidating their corporate volunteering programmes is the capacity to mobilise employees. A lot has been said on the topic, especially regarding people's first time participating in these types of programmes. However, one area less examined is that of the employees' motivations for remaining in the programme after having tried it.

The reasons why volunteers stop participating has not been thoroughly explored either. One study carried out in Australia in 2013, called **Corporate volunteering: Connecting People, Participation & Performance**, analysed data collected from over 4000 employees in an attempt to address these two questions. According to the study, the two main reasons volunteers have for repeating the experience are: feeling that the work is useful (90%) and spurring real change in the community (88%). In other words, volunteers place a great value in knowing that what they do matters and has a social impact. This is particularly relevant with regard to the newer generations of employees.

The study draws a distinction between the volunteers' profiles, differentiating between employees younger than 25 and employees between 45 and 55 years of age. This way, it features the higher value young people place on volunteering opportunities that allow them to apply their competencies (66% compared to 45% of the 45-55 age group), as well as opportunities to work alongside their team or workmates (64% compared to 42%).

"

The number of employees participating in corporate volunteering programmes is dropping, but their hourly dedication is much higher.

According to the study, what are the key features needed to achieve a proper strategy of corporate volunteering?

1/ Sponsored corporate volunteering projects or funded by the company— what experts identify as "customizing" their causes.

2/ Opportunities for team volunteer projects.A key element for volunteering to succeed as a management tool.

3/ Volunteering programmes attached to fewer NGOs but with closer and more profound connections: promoting alliances between NGOs and companies on a medium and long-term basis.

4/ Volunteering programmes which offer spare time for employees.

5/ Implementation of volunteering programmes based on ability and pro-bono, which generate a larger social impact than assistance-based schemes.

6/ Closer bonds between volunteering and professional development plans (leadership skills training), once more linking corporate volunteering and HR.

7/ Volunteering programmes that encourage employees to support NGOs as part of their government bodies. This allows an improvement in the NGO's social performance and in their volunteer management.

8/ Great efforts to accurately measure the return on the investment of volunteering programmes. This is an essential point according to authorities, who stress the importance of measuring the impact of volunteering.

9/ Implementation of recognition systems on employees who take part in these programmes.

10/ Understanding that the form of management of corporate volunteering has changed, shifting from a Top-Down model to a more participatory model that allows employees a greater ownership of the project.

In what regards the reasons behind abandoning volunteer work, the study highlights that employees believe they have less time for voluntary activity (this is especially important for the 45-55 age group) or they cite a change in role or department in the company that requires them to undertake new tasks (featured in the 25-35 age group).

Another key report for analysing the evolution of corporate volunteering is **2015 Corporate Volunteering Report in Latin America**, prepared by the Corporate Volunteering Observatory with the support of Voluntare, and examines data from Spain and Latin America. From the afore-mentioned study, we find two focus points especially relevant. On the one hand, there is a noticeable reduction in employee participation numbers. (The number of companies with levels of participation under 10% has risen significantly from 2013 to 2015.) However, if one examines the progress of the number of hours dedicated to volunteering one can observe that the number of employees who dedicate more than 10 hours of volunteer work per year has increased from 11.5% in 2013 to 33% in 2015.
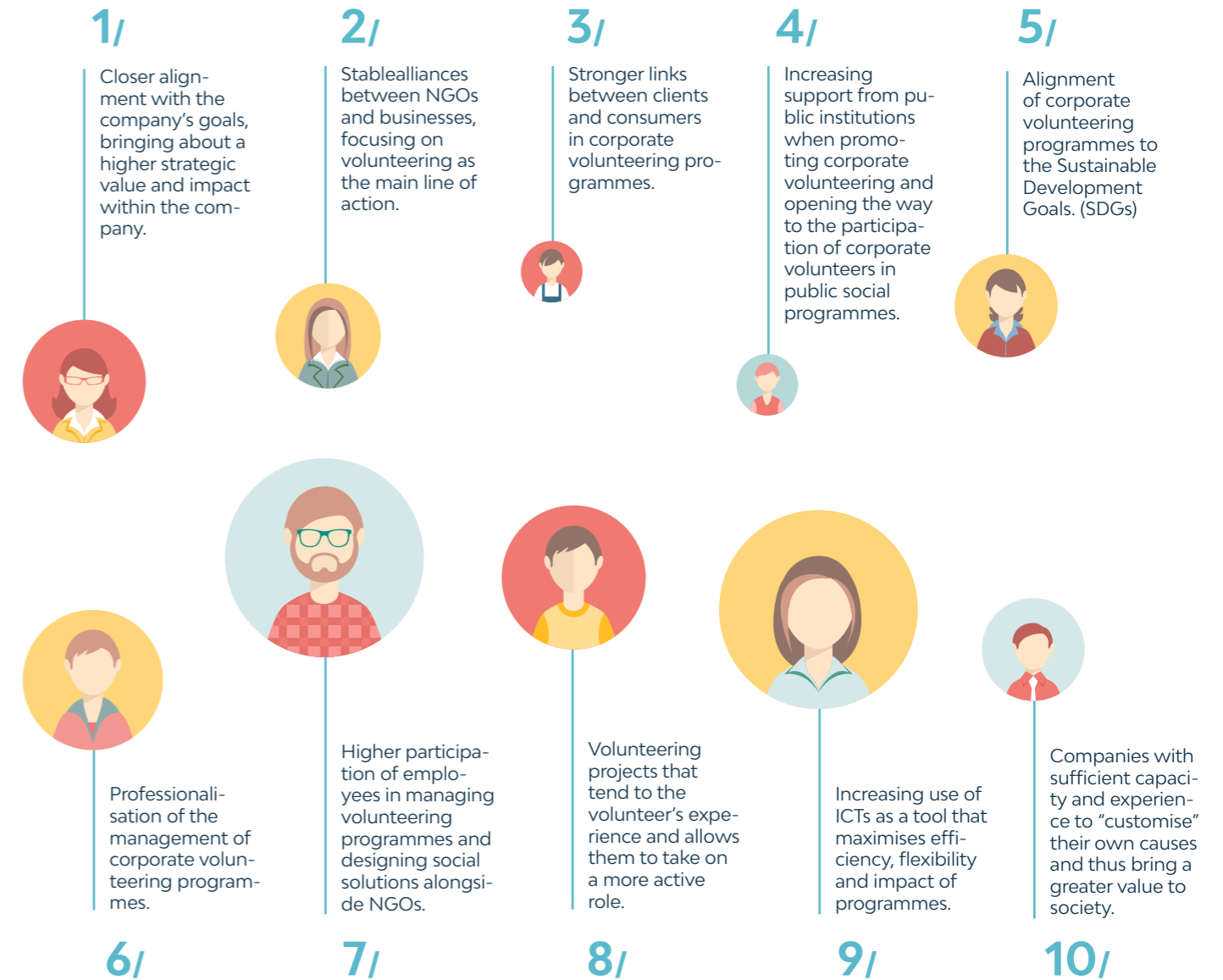
Therefore when analysing the data jointly, we can identify a tendency in which there are fewer employees participating in volunteering programmes but nevertheless, the number of hours dedicated is significantly higher. This reality can be interpreted as an **evolution of volunteering programmes, where occasional and mass activities are reduced in favour of models allowing a greater participation and higher social impact.**

2016
2015
2014
2013

All this is aligned with the conclusions reached in the American study, which shows that more and more companies are offering year-long volunteering opportunities and not only at specific times during the year. There is an increase in the number of volunteering hours, and in turn, a rise in social impact and in the credibility of said programme on the part of employees and other interest groups. The study also coincides with the experts' opinion on the need to increase the social impact of corporate volunteering programmes in contrast with models based on occasional mass activities.

10/ ASPECTS OF THE NEXT DECADE'S CORPORATE VOUNTEERING

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1/ Closer alignment with the company's goals, bringing about a higher strategic value and impact within the company.

2/ Stablealliances between NGOs and businesses, focusing on volunteering as the main line of action.

3/ Stronger links between clients and consumers in corporate volunteering programmes.

4/ Increasing support from public institutions when promoting corporate volunteering and opening the way to the participation of corporate volunteers in public social programmes.

5/ Alignment of corporate volunteering programmes to the Sustainable Development Goals. (SDGs)

6/ Professionalisation of the management of corporate volunteering programmes.

7/ Higher participation of employees in managing volunteering programmes and designing social solutions alongside NGOs.

8/ Volunteering projects that tend to the volunteer's experience and allows them to take on a more active role.

9/ Increasing use of ICTs as a tool that maximises efficiency, flexibility and impact of programmes.

10/ Companies with sufficient capacity and experience to "customise" their own causes and thus bring a greater value to society.

IMPACT|2030

International Association for Volunteer Effort

POINTS OF LIGHT

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VERAWORKS

CEV European Volunteer Centre

ÖNKÉNTES KÖZPONT ALAPÍTVÁNY

IBM

Telefónica FUNDACIÓN

BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

VOLUNTEER BÉNÉVOLES CANADA

PYXERA GLOBAL

KPMG

UN VOLUNTEERS

ANEX I :
Questionnaire submitted to experts

As part of the goal of promoting corporate volunteering and maximising its impact, Voluntare has created an area of innovation to examine the current trends as well as the evolution of these programmes. We will issue periodical reports that can be useful for companies and NGOs.

To craft this report, we have identified a group of key organisations that can grant us a complementary perspective to reach our goal. For this reason, we issue the following survey to get to know your opinion and better understand the trends of corporate volunteering at an international level, the state of innovation in the field and the lines of action currently being followed to face different social challenges.

It won't take you longer than 5 minutes, and the information you supply us will be highly useful:

1/ What are the three most innovative features in corporate volunteering that are being developed in your country or other countries?

_____

_____

2/ Which two aspects of corporate volunteering will become obsolete or less popular in the next 10 years?

_____

_____

3/ Could you mention three trends that will become prominent in the next 10 years?

_____

_____

4/ Could you indicate three key features in corporate volunteering aimed to maximise social impact?

_____

_____

5/ What are the three main challenges that corporate volunteering must face in the next 5 years?

_____

_____

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Coordinador de Voluntare:

Voluntariado y Estrategia