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## Practical Aspects Of Volunteer Movement Development In Moscow.

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### ABSTRACT

The article reveals the main directions of volunteer movement in Moscow. Based on the conducted sociological study, the authors define the problems and explore the possible perspectives of volunteer movement development in Moscow. The idea of volunteering is actualized most successfully in the youth environment, and due to this the special focus goes to the volunteer movement development in school and college students. We would also like to point out that volunteering is one of the convenient forms of organizing, activating and self-actualization of the youth. In the conditions of deficit of faith and ideas and economic instability volunteering is able to provide the youth with a sufficient "moral anchor" for developing a strong socially significant personality.

**Keywords:** youth, volunteer movement, volunteering, society, citizen activism.

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## INTRODUCTION

Currently the issue of attracting the modern youth to the volunteer activity is rather significant, because the volunteer institution is necessary for normal functioning of a society. More than 110 million people worldwide participate in various volunteering projects, programs and initiatives. From the 1998 the impulse for the movement development was caused by the UN naming 2001 the International Year of Volunteers and progressed under the sign of preparing for the International Year of Volunteers in coordination with the leading international centers.

Analysis of the studies of the issue shows that recently both Russian and international researchers focus on the questions of volunteer movement development. For example, the legal aspects of volunteer activity are presented in the works of A.K. Tolmasova (2009). A significant amount of works address the issues of volunteer labor, the interaction of state institutions and social organizations and study of the historical aspect of volunteer movement development in Russia (Bondrenkova, 2014).

Theoretical and applied questions of volunteer movement development are the subject of sociological, legal, political and other studies.

The ambiguity of the main scientific categories in this subject field remains; e.g. in Russia the concepts of “volunteering” and “willful acting” have very similar definitions. Volunteering is people’s participation, regardless of their race, age, sex and religion, in the events, aimed at solving social, cultural, economic and ecological problems in the society, not related to gaining profit. Sociological encyclopedic dictionary defines willful acting as the actions of a person, who willfully provides him/her-self for a certain goal or activity. The factors, which define the efficiency of volunteers’ activity, are not completely studied (Khukhlin, 2003; Schekova, 2003; Potapova, 2004; Fayzullin, 2014; Evstratova & Abakhova, 2014).

## METHODS

Informational basis of the study are federal normative-legal acts, statistical data and informational-analytical materials from the “Mosvolonter” portal (Moscow SBI “MOSVOLONTER” 2016; [www.mosvolonter.ru](http://www.mosvolonter.ru)).

Analysis of the literature on the topic of the study shows that the subject of volunteers’ sub-culture is primarily addressed in the publicist literature in the field of psychology, sociology, cultural studies and social work. In different times it was addressed by such authors as N.A. Potapova, D. Mayers, M. Olchman and P. Jordan. The problem of volunteers’ motivation has not been described enough in the scientific literature. Such national and international scientists, as M. Darly, K. Daniel Batson, A.K. Markova, N.A. Nizovskikh and others, addressed this problem in their research. Current problem was studied by Russian pedagogues E. Buglak, O. Fetisova and O. Klikunova, sociologists N.P. Peshkov and D. Mayers, as well as Russian economist E. Schekova.

In their works these authors focus on such issues as:

- content and structural characteristics of volunteer labor;
- role and place of volunteer activity in the society;
- applied and methodic recommendations for volunteer activity development in the youth.

Despite the high research interest in the subject of civil society, as well as volunteering, the problem of volunteering institutionalization in the Russian civil society structure remains unsolved. The present article is an attempt to fill this gap.

This predefined the subject and the object of our study, as well as its goals and tasks.

The goal of the study is to reveal the characteristics of volunteering institutionalization in the Russian civil society structure, particularly to reveal the problems and address the possible perspectives of volunteer movement development in Moscow.

Reaching the set goal implies setting and solving the following tasks:

- to characterize the characteristics of civil society functioning from the sociologic perspective;

- to validate the methodology of studying volunteering the civil society structure;
- to reveal the social predispositions for volunteering institutionalization;
- to reveal social and legal characteristics of volunteering institutionalization in Russia;
- to describe the problems of volunteer movement actualization and social-demographic portrait of a Russian volunteer.

The object of the study is institutions of Russian civil society.

The subject of the study is the volunteering institutionalization in the Russian civil society structure.

Theoretical and methodological basis of the study are the ideas and paradigms, which were developed in the works of the leading national sociologists, philosophers, cultural researchers and legal scientists. From the perspective of the set tasks, the fundamental approaches include institutional and social-cultural approaches. Among the separate methods, which were used in the study, are the methods of comparative analysis, typology, classification method, questionnaire, method of social factors and events analysis. Such apparatus allowed revealing dynamic characteristic of civil society and its institution of volunteering.

Empiric base of the study consists of the materials of the secondary analysis of scientific literature and sociological studies of the civil society and volunteering organization, as well as the data of the original empiric study – the social survey of volunteers, conducted by the authors in Moscow in 2014.

## RESULTS

Multiple children and youth volunteer programs actively exist and develop on the territory of Moscow. These social groups monitor the state of cemeteries, monuments and obelisks, conduct the laying of flowers during the Days of military glory and participate in ecologic volunteering and assistance of veterans and disabled people. The youth volunteer activity in Moscow is developed relatively well.

“Mosvolonter” is the largest social volunteer movement in the capital for the successful, involved and perspective young people, which includes social groups and projects. More than 5000 volunteers participate in the volunteer movement. Youth volunteer activity creates an opportunity for self-actualization and allows developing positive life values. In the future this will help reaching success in the professional career.

Volunteer activity for the city provides a significant contribution in reaching the social politics and improving the quality of life of the citizens, as well as provides an opportunity for observational initiative and social creation of young Moscow citizens.

Currently there is not a single city event without the assistance from the volunteers. “Mosvolonter” supported such major events, as the Forum of Moscow youth, Meeting of volunteers, St. George ribbon, International summit of APEC.

A number of social youth organizations (Regional organization for youth social support “Student Commune”, volunteer movement of the South-West administrative district, volunteer movement for the support of disabled people of the East administrative district, Regional youth social organization “The union of the youth from Moscow Aviation Institute”, Social movement “Volunteer of the Central administrative district”, Moscow city headquarters of “Young Guard of United Russia”, Moscow headquarters of youth student squads) became the reliable social partners and non-governmental resource centers for the volunteer practices development and the centers for volunteer preparation for participation in the organization and conduction of XXVII International Summer Universiade 2013 in Kazan.

In November 2011 over 400 volunteers in the 24-hour mode assisted the pilgrims, who came to venerate the Cincture of the Virgin Mary.

Organizational and resource support was provided to volunteer centers in Sochi-2014, which were created on the basis of seven Moscow colleges, where over 16 thousands of candidates for Olympic volunteers studied and 8 thousands gained an opportunities to work at the Olympics. Moscow volunteers became the participants of the Olympic torch relay events, which took place on 8-9 October 2013.

Over 800 Moscow volunteers organized the gathering of humanitarian aid for the citizens of Krymsk, which suffered from the flood.

United information resource of Moscow volunteer activity is, basically, an analytical laboratory of the non-profit organizations of the capital. The following special sub-divisions, which highlight and study various directions of volunteer activity and its participants, are created:

- History of Moscow volunteer movement,
- Normative basis of volunteer activity,
- State support,
- Business projects,
- Social volunteering,
- Confessions,
- Charity events,
- Grants and contests,
- Volunteering in the country,
- Volunteering abroad,
- Digest of the publications about volunteering in the mass-media,
- Volunteer’s handbook,
- The archive of “Moscow volunteer journal” issues.

The main problem of development movement development on the territory of Moscow is the lack of knowledge about the conducted events and problems in the large amount of young people with potential. The main factor of search and discovery of volunteers is the volunteer activity attractiveness. Along with it, there are special events, trainings and other educational and informational events.

Actualizing the volunteering initiatives creates the base for Youth social boards in the Moscow district prefectures. The developed practice of government interaction with the youth active allows widely attracting the youth to the participation in the fulfillment of tasks, defined in the Paradigm of Moscow development in the period until 2020 and the Paradigm of working with the citizens (On the volunteer movement development in the Central administrative district of Moscow; 10.06.2015www.pandia.ru/text/77/375/16247.php#1).

The actualization of the Paradigm of volunteer movement development in Moscow defined several groups of risks and ways of their systemic overcoming (see table 1).

**Table 1. Risks, which might occur in the process of volunteer movement and ways of overcoming them.**

№	Risks type	Ways of overcoming
1	Risks related to the organizational conditions (insufficient skills and abilities of the volunteers)	Organization of a training system for potential volunteers, which includes conduction of psychological and pedagogic trainings in the context of goal-directed social order of the Moscow Educational management.
2	Risks related to the security pf the main volunteer movement subjects (both recipients and volunteers)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. System of special volunteers selection for certain activity types.</li> <li>2. Conduction of informational campaign for structured explanation of how the interaction between the recipients and the volunteers.</li> <li>3. Structured instructing and teaching of the volunteers.</li> <li>4. Creation of special system for “attaching” the volunteers to certain recipients.</li> <li>5. Creation of special system for coordinating and controlling the volunteers’ activity, which is coordinated with the specialists from the social security structures.</li> <li>6. Integration of special trainings on providing one’s own security in the volunteer training system.</li> </ol>

3	Risks related to the negative affirmations of the social conscience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Regular social opinion surveys with the aim of understanding and managing the social conscience.</li> <li>2. Development of volunteer movement recognition.</li> <li>3. Translation of the messages about the participation of business as one of the sources of financial additions in the ideology and the provision of financial transparency.</li> <li>4. Structured explanation of how anybody can become a member of the volunteer movement; development of separate directions of work with various age and social groups.</li> </ol>
4	Risks related to the interaction of volunteer movement subjects	Structured definition of all norms and regulations of interaction inside the movement and conduction of separate informational campaign for social organization in order to explain these norms and regulations.
5	Risks related to informational presentation of the movement activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of the own public affairs office by the executive organ of the volunteer movement, which would be responsible for informational and advertisement politics of the movement.</li> <li>2. Wide and instrumentally validated informational campaign for explaining the ideology and principles of the movement activity.</li> </ol>

In order to obtain the information about the priority directions of social activity for young people we conducted a sociological study in 2014, which included 631 participants. The volunteers were 41.6% of the subject sample, 25.2% of the respondents are the organizers of volunteer activity and 33.2% of the sample is interested in volunteering.

In their activity the volunteers are regulated by a group of motives (Bakhtina et al., 2015). The first place is taken by the motive to provide help (85.6%), the second is the opportunity to meet new people and needs in communication and affiliation (48.5%). The urge to fight a certain problem lies in the third place (48%). These motives, as expected, have the leading positions in the volunteer environment. It is with such world-view that the person becomes a volunteer. The fourth place (47%) goes to the urge to learn something new. Therefore, the volunteers are ready and willing to expand their knowledge, abilities and skills. Moreover, such data, obviously, demonstrate the opportunity to use various programs of volunteers training as a mean of stimulation. Most importantly, these programs have to be application-oriented.

The most “popular” areas of volunteering are pedagogic (33.2%), ecological (21.8%) and medical (20.8%) activity directions. The least common volunteer activity directions at present moment are historic-archeological (6.9%) and social-routine (6.4%) directions. The survey of respondents allowed revealing, how the main volunteering directions are distributed in the volunteer activity field. Furthermore, it is necessary to note that, as the study showed, often volunteers might participate in several volunteer activity directions (Kryukova et al., 2013, 2014, 2015; Zaernjuk, et al., 2014; Vinogradova et al., 2014; Ilina et al., 2015).

With the passing of a number of lawful measures and changes, including the acceptance of the Paradigm for supporting volunteering and charity by the RF government in 2009 and introducing the changes to the law on volunteering, positive tendencies in volunteering development occurred and more favorable legal conditions for conducting volunteer activity are created. The scales of state financial support of the programs and projects, aimed at the volunteer development by the federal budget, are expanded.

Students of various colleges actively participate in the volunteer movement. The participation in the volunteer movement itself serves as an element of youth development, especially for students, who are taught in managerial specialties (Vinichenko, 2015).

Along with the development of positive tendencies in creating legal, organizational and economic conditions for volunteering development support, there is a number of unsolved problems, which define the substantial gap between the number of citizens, who state their potential readiness to participate in volunteer activity (over 40%) and the number of citizens, who actually participate in that activity (approximately 3% of economically active population). It is necessary to point out that in the youth environment the percentage of youth participation in the volunteer activity is slightly higher and is approximately 6-8% of the total youth population. Students do not always participate in the volunteer movement due to the irrational distribution of

their time – student time-management (Kirillov et al., 2015). Another problem is the students' urge not to waste time on volunteering, but rather to enter the labor life as early as possible in order to increase their desirability and value on the market (Vinichenko, 2012).

It becomes obvious that the problems, which define the unpopularity of volunteering initiatives, slow down the processes of the city social development, positive youth development, civil society strengthening and development and democratic values establishment; they lead to the worsening of the social problems acuity and, in general, weaken the growth of trust in the society.

The Paradigm of support for volunteer activity and willful doing in Moscow the main problems, related to the low level of citizens involvement in the volunteer activity, names the underdevelopment of infrastructure of volunteer activity support and lack of information about volunteer activity, motivation, goals and its real results.

Solving this large-scale task would imply the development and actualization of a system of legal, organizational and economic measures and events, acceptance of the appropriate political decisions, which imply the real state support and investment in the development of infrastructure of the resources and all interested organizations' efforts. The developed mechanism of systemic volunteering support and development should be based on the international and national experience. Charity activity and volunteering development in Moscow would serve as an efficient government politics tool in the social, youth and educational fields, in civil society development and in creation of the conditions for the actualization of citizens' rights for complete participation in the social life (Federal law from 19<sup>th</sup> May 1995 #82-FZ "On social groups").

## DISCUSSION

The perspectives of the social development of our country and the development of Russian civil society have their specifics. On the one hand, moving forward is unthinkable without the active participation of the state, as it is happening in the social European countries. On the other hand, in the Russian reality the state on the level of its legal basis has been the destructor of the social area for a rather long time. Only reaching fundamentally new social and legal positions would allow creating the necessary predispositions for the development of primary conditions for the civil society establishment in our country and for the balance between the state and the society. This, in turn, actualizes the need for studying the present events, including studying it in the context of social paradigm.

The controversy of modern social relationships development shows the necessity to search for new solutions in the social field (Kirillov et al., 2015). Currently such direction as volunteering is actively developing. Volunteer activity originated a long time ago (in the first centuries of the Christianity existence). At present it takes modern forms, and in particular, it becomes a significant social institution.

It is representative that, by the decision of European Committee, 2011 was officially announced as the Year of Volunteering in Europe. The alliance of European social organizations planned a big work for organizing the events, which were conducted in the framework of the Year of Volunteering. Announcing the 2011 as the Year of Volunteering in Europe is a logical reaction to the actions of European civil society system. Notably, on December 20<sup>th</sup> 2011, the first Moscow meeting of volunteers took place, and it gathered thousands of volunteers. This proves the significance of the volunteer work for individuals, hospices, regions, countries, nations and Europe in general.

The European Union has been conducting the work for supporting volunteering in the past several years; in 1996 the EU established the European Volunteer Service (EVC) for supporting the youth participation in the social life. The aim of the EVC is the development of solidarity, mutual help and tolerance between people, as well as the support of an active social position in the youth.

The European Year of Volunteering sets the goal of attracting more people to the volunteer work by creating a simplified access to it, awarding the volunteers, improving the quality of volunteering, providing trainings, selecting volunteers for the appropriate positions and expanding the knowledge about the significance of the volunteer work.

This subject gains the significance, because a large amount of people needs support. During the past two decades there were a large number of social, cultural and economic transformations in the Russian society. Apart from the positive moments, their consequence is a tendency for expansion and complication of the social problems and growing social troubles of certain social classes on the background of the quality of life improvement in others. Because of this, the organizations, institutions and services, which aim at providing social help, became highly significant for the society. However, as a result of a very wide range of social problems, as well as a large number of clients, these organizations require volunteer activity more and more.

Unfortunately, many people lack the help from their relatives and close people, and this is the reason why they need the external care. It might be provided, and it is provided in reality, by the volunteers. They willfully share their time, energy, abilities and knowledge in order to help other people or the environment without any material profit. Each of them wants to believe that the work that he/she does is very important, even if it very simple. Therefore, volunteer activity has a civil nature and has already become an inherent part of a modern society. The experience of volunteer activity demonstrates the charitable direction of this work.

The topic, which we selected, gains high significance in relation to the National projects of the Russian Federation, which are currently presented as the key question of the internal state politics. At the present stage the National projects are a stimulus and a catalyst of the systemic changes in the fields of Health and Education. Priority directions of the "Paradigm of long-term social-economic development of the Russian Federation in the period until 2020" include "supporting the development of charity activity practice of the citizens and organizations, as well as the distribution of willful activity (volunteering)".

## CONCLUSION

The main strategic directions of volunteering development in Moscow include:

1. Improving the laws about volunteering:
  - legal fixation of the volunteer status, which accounts for the social (non-economic) nature of volunteering and separates a volunteer from the employee of the hired labor, defined according to the present laws of the Russian Federation;
  - establishment of state guarantees of volunteers' rights and interests protection in the process of their work on the willful bases, of the volunteer organizations and organizations, which support volunteer activity, including the establishment of the amount and conditions, in which volunteers' social protection and insurance is conducted;
  - establishment of frame conditions for making agreements between a volunteer and an organization, where he works, on the obligations of the sides and their mutual responsibility;
  - legal fixation of the conditions and the order of receiving educational or other encouraging grants, privileges, covering educational programs/education, etc. for young volunteers; introduction of the forms of combining volunteer activity with education process into the education system;
2. Improvement and development of the infrastructure of volunteering support and development and social-state partnership, i.e. creation of volunteer centers, which provide the resource support of the whole complex of services for efficient volunteer activity organization in various organizations on the city level. Improvement of the social-state partnership mechanisms during the solution of socially significant problems and social politics actualization implies the development of documentation, including typical statements about a volunteer center, a youth volunteer service, a "Volunteer of the year" contest, etc.
3. The development of youth volunteering, youth volunteering programs, programs of family and corporate volunteering, i.e. the system of stimulating youth volunteering as an element of youth politics and state education, aimed at attracting the youth/adolescents into the socially useful volunteer activity, which implies the support of the events for recognizing the youth for their volunteer contribution in the social and economic development of the community.  
Development of youth volunteer programs in the education system is implied through the mechanisms of education-mentoring process, methods of civil education and extracurricular mentoring, and, prospectively, by integrating an innovative method of "Educating by serving", which is based on the integration of youth volunteering with the education process and aimed at

better acquisition of the theoretic knowledge and gain of the applied skills by the students in the process of volunteer labor (Kudrinskaya, 2006).

The development of volunteer programs for family volunteering (cooperative participation of the family members in the volunteer activity) and corporate volunteering (participation of companies' employees in the volunteer activity of the local communities) is actualized by conducting educational programs and volunteering events for family and corporate volunteering.

4. Financial mechanisms, which allow stable coverage of the minimal costs, related to organization and functioning of the volunteering initiatives support and development system, are conducted in accordance to the orientation of the social-economic development strategies and the priority directions of volunteers attraction to participation in socially-oriented activity and civil state development. This implies budget sponsorship and attraction of extra-budget sources, contributions and others sources, which do not contradict the Russian laws.
5. The development of international cooperation in the volunteering field with the leading international volunteering organizations: International Association for Volunteer Efforts (IAVE), European Volunteer Center (CEV) and United Nations Volunteer Program (UNV).

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