

# 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

## VOLUNTARY SERVICE INTERNATIONAL





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# VSI Board

VSI is governed by its members, through the Annual General Meeting, which elects a board of directors to manage the organisation on behalf of its members. The Board met 6 times during the year. Members of the VSI Board in 2018 were Aisling Twohill (Chair), Thomas McGarvey (Treasurer), Siobhán Sleeman, Cathy Boobbyer, Fran Bisset and Kate van der Merwe.

The 2017 AGM was held in Dublin at the beginning of December, 9 members were present at the meeting.

VSI is a member of the National Youth Council of Ireland and of Dóchas, the Irish Association for Non-Governmental Development Organisation. VSI is a signatory to the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages and to the Comhlámh Code of Good Practice for Volunteer Sending Agencies. VSI is on the journey of the 'Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland'.

**We acknowledge and greatly appreciate the generous support from:**

•The Department of Children and Youth Affairs



•National Lottery



•Health Service Executive

•The Erasmus+ programme—the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport



•Léargas



# Staff

- **Helen Walmsley** - CEO
- **Mateja Jakšić** - Volunteer Programme Coordinator
- **Sylwia Molenda** - IVP Placement Officer (EVS volunteer from 2017 – June 2018)
- **Eliška Šestáková** - IVP Placement Officer (EVS volunteer from May – December 2018)
- **Cati Ana Moragues** - Marketing & Communications Officer (EVS volunteer from 2017 – April 2018)
- **Ana Plovanić** - Marketing & Communications Officer (EVS volunteer from April – June 2018)
- **Lilia Enamorado** - Short-term EVS Volunteer (October – November 2018)
- **Joseph Bell** - Intern (February – May 2018)
- **Nikki Trasmonte** - Intern (July – August 2018)
- **Tara Vindla** - Intern (September – December 2018)
- **Jean Pierre Habarurema** - Work Placement Student (November 2018 – 2019)
- **Laura Paraschiv** – Administrator (December)

The Board would like to express gratitude to the staff team who over the year have approached their work in a professional and enthusiastic manner.

The Board would also like to acknowledge the effort that volunteers put into VSI and thank them for their great work, motivation and energy in 2018.

**We would like to thank:**

- All our volunteers, activists and committee members
- Sponsoring and co-operating organisations
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- Erasmus + Programme via Léargas
- Health Service Executive
- RBK (auditors)
- SCI Branches and the SCI International Secretariat

VSI staff, autumn 2018



# International Volunteer projects

## IVP International

In 2018 VSI sent 30 volunteers on short-term International Volunteer Projects. Our volunteers travelled to 16 different countries this year, and many decided to volunteer in an International environment in Ireland.

Here are some photos and statistics:



*"I feel like our being here makes a small intangible impact on teachers and students, as we realise that, while our goals are identical in terms of education, the implementation is different."*  
—Aonghus, Volunteer in Tanzania

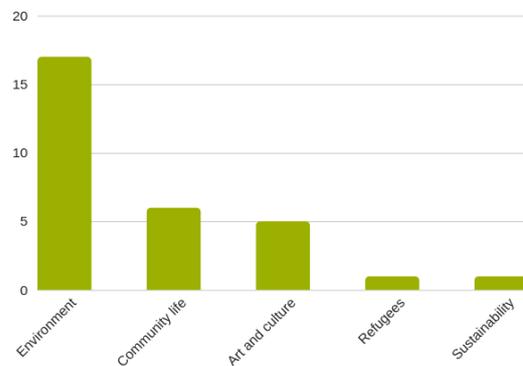


### COUNTRIES OUR IVP VOLUNTEERS WENT TO

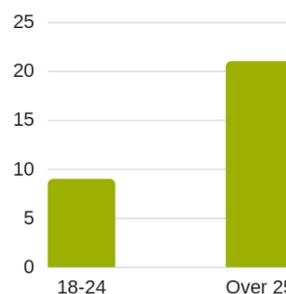
IRELAND 6	ESTONIA 4	ICELAND 3
SPAIN 2	TANZANIA 2	CZECH REPUBLIC 2
SERBIA 1	UGANDA 1	GERMANY 1
KOSOVO 1	PALESTINE 1	UNITED KINGDOM 1
RUSSIA 1	DENMARK 1	LUXEMBOURG 1
AUSTRIA 1	ITALY 1	



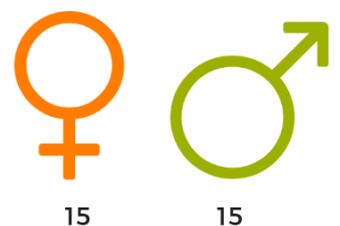
### IVP VOLUNTEER TYPE OF PROJECT



### AGE OF IVP VOLUNTEERS



### GENDER OF IVP VOLUNTEERS



# International Volunteer Projects (IVP)

## IVP Ireland

In 2018 VSI organised 10 IVPs in Ireland, and 2 volunteer projects in Mosney in the summer and late October.

- **Killarney National Park x 4, Co. Kerry**

VSI volunteers helped throughout the summer fighting the invasive rhododendron plant.

- **Camphill Community x 2, (Ballybay, Co. Monaghan and Grangebeg, Co. Kildare)**

VSI volunteers worked in the gardens, and helped the Communities with minor work and ongoing projects such as building a great new swing for the Camphill residents!

- **Glebe House x 2, Co. Down**

VSI volunteers helped to organise an Open Day event, and also helped with gardening and cleaning up after the summer programme for children.

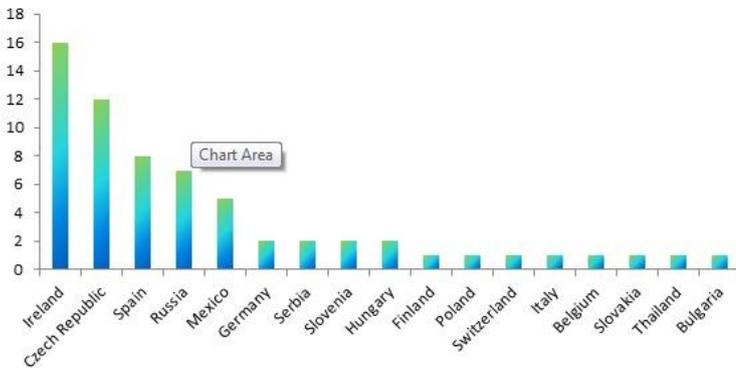
- **Cuisle x 2, Co. Roscommon**

VSI volunteers socialised with holiday guests and accompanied guests with physical disabilities on a variety



**Volunteers at Killarney**

**Where incoming IVP Volunteers were from**



**Volunteer at Ballybay**



**Volunteers at Glebe**

*"The project brought together a group of people from several countries with the aim of doing something for the common good and learning about each other. I think everybody understood that it is through teamwork and co-operation, not conflict, that humans can obtain their objectives and achieve a better society."*

—Gary, Volunteer in Killarney

# International Volunteer Projects (IVP)

## IVP Ireland

### Volunteer Projects in Mosney Accommodation Centre

In collaboration with Froebel Department of Maynooth University, we delivered playful and educational projects for children in Mosney Accommodation Centre, Co. Meath. More than 80 children joined the Summer Camp in August and the Mid-term Activity Camp in October. We did arts and crafts, made posters and collages about the environment and human rights, we did dance and sports and even had a big talent show where we had the chance to enjoy different performances the children had prepared for each other. Thank you to all the students who made this possible! And special thanks to their lecturer Aoife Titley whose motivation and dedication to social justice are an inspiration.



Summer Camp in Mosney



Mid-term Activity Camp in Mosney

## IVP Coordinators

VSI International Volunteer Project Coordinators did a great job supporting volunteer groups on our projects in Ireland and introducing them to VSI, our mission and our values. Thank you VSI coordinators for your great work!

VSI Coordinators' Training



*"Two weeks is a short time when you get a lifetime of memories from Killarney!"* —Sanga, Killarney Project Coordinator

# VSI Events

## Info Evening Event, April 2018

VSI held an Info Evening on 12th April, to spread the word to young people and youth workers about our opportunities for young people. We launched our 2018 programme and presented International Volunteer Projects such as working with refugees and asylum seekers at a community centre in Belgium, fighting environmental degradation in Indonesia and organising leisure activities for people with disabilities in Italy. Lots of VSI members and volunteers gathered in the Carmelite Community Centre to provide interested volunteers with information on different volunteering opportunities and share their volunteering experience.

### VSI Preparation Workshop



## Preparation Workshop, May 2018

We held our annual Preparation Workshop for outgoing volunteers on 19th May and gathered volunteers from around Ireland to learn more about international volunteering and development education. Volunteers also shared their hopes, fears and expectations and heard stories from experienced volunteers.

*"I think respecting different cultures, not getting bogged down in our own, being open minded, respecting people's views is important. We all bonded and stuck in, that's what was great."*

— Oliver, volunteer in Grangebeg

## VSI Get Together, September 2018

The VSI Volunteer Get Together for outgoing volunteers took place on 22nd September. Volunteers shared and evaluated their experience and shared ideas of how their project made a difference. At the end we had a stimulating presentation about how you can get involved with VSI and the steps to take to turn your volunteering experience into active citizenship from Children in Crossfire.

### VSI Evaluation Get Together



## Meetings with IVP Coordinators, May and October 2018

### VSI Coordinators' Training



In order to run our IVP projects in Ireland smoothly, we need the support of IVP volunteer project coordinators. We gathered nine motivated people at a weekend training during May for our Coordinators' Training Course. We covered topics such as group dynamics, communication skills, conflict management and all the important aspects of the role of an IVP coordinator. Five volunteers continued their journey with VSI and helped deliver amazing projects in Killarney and Ballybay. Another already experienced VSI coordinator supported the Grangebeg project.

We gathered our coordinators of the 2018 season together again on 5th October. The coordinators discussed and reviewed their projects. Their comments and contributions will be used for future planning of our projects.

# European Voluntary Service (EVS)



EVS is an EU-funded programme that gives young people (aged 18 to 30) the opportunity to volunteer in an organisation abroad. Volunteering projects can involve many different kinds of activities in areas such as youth work, cultural activities, social care and environmental protection.

EVS volunteers are provided with travel to and from the project, accommodation, food, a small personal allowance, language training and local transport.

14 VSI EVS volunteers started/completed their volunteering projects in 2018.

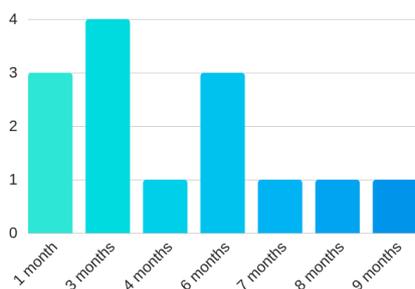
Here are some photos and statistics:



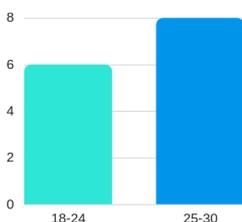
## COUNTRIES OUR EVS VOLUNTEERS WENT TO



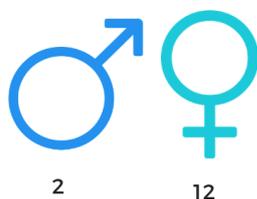
## NUMBER OF MONTHS EVS VOLUNTEERS DID IN 2018



## AGE OF EVS VOLUNTEERS



## GENDER OF EVS VOLUNTEERS



*“What I learned during my EVS is that there’s no point in going for something you don’t want to do – life is too short.”*

— Margaret, EVS in Albania



Volunteers in Vietnam

*“We had an Irish culture night where I gave a presentation about Irish history and culture. Hanoi is a beautiful city, the food is amazing and the people are so funny and honest.”*

— Zoe, EVS in Vietnam

# Organisations our EVS volunteers have supported this year:



Volunteers in Vietnam

- **Projekte Vullnetare Nderkombetare (PVN), Albania**

One of the volunteers did her short term project with our SCI branch in Albania, Projekte Vullnetare Nderkombetare (PVN), working on human rights education with young people with fewer opportunities and organising short term summer International Volunteer Projects.

- **Lava Legato, The Netherlands**

One volunteer was working with Lava Legato in The Netherlands, on a diverse social enterprise project. Activities included support work in a primary school, participating in an arts and crafts club and an urban garden.

- **Artico Centre for Children and Youth, Moldova**

A volunteer who recently started her EVS in Moldova is involved in activities focused on social inclusion and non-formal education of children and youth as well as projects aiming to facilitate active citizenship among young people.

- **SCI Hellas and the Greek Forum of Refugees, Greece**

One of our volunteers took part in a group EVS project involving creative activities and working with refugee children with the Greek Forum of Refugees and the Refugees' Communities.

- **Stella Polaris, Norway**

One volunteer did a short term EVS project in Norway, involving theatre, dance, music, song, acrobatics and circus, as well as acting and doing active training for an outdoor performance and attending a Viking Festival.

- **EUSA, Slovenia**

One volunteer started her long term EVS with the European University Sports Association. The project involves educational events, sporting events, promotional activities, social responsibility programmes, etc.

- **Community Development through English Teaching (CODET) project**

The CODET project is 2-year EU-funded project with the aim to give young people an opportunity to gain volunteering experience in a non-profit organization abroad, which will help them develop personally and professionally, become more tolerant and open to other cultures. The project is a partnership between non-profit organizations in Ireland, Latvia, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Honduras, Cambodia and Vietnam. As a part of this project, two VSI volunteers from Ireland did a short-term placements, in Honduras and Vietnam. VSI also hosted one volunteer from Honduras in our office in Dublin.



Volunteers in Greece

VSI also worked with EVS volunteers who started their projects in 2017 and returned this year from their projects with PVN in Albania, Pistes Solidaires in France, World Without Borders in Belarus, Lava Legato in The Netherlands and Euromed Carrefour Sicilia in Italy.

*"I really enjoyed it, the women taught us how to do macramé even though we couldn't communicate properly due to the language barrier."*

— Annmarie, EVS in Greece

# Dublin Local Group (DLG)



## 2018 Report

The Dublin Local Group (DLG) of VSI undertakes to improve the living conditions of elderly, disabled and marginalised people living in Dublin. We mainly try to help out in situations where the living standard of a person or family has fallen well below the general standard and where they are unable to help themselves because of their physical, social or financial situation. The type of work involves cleaning, painting, de-cluttering, gardening and some small repairs.

This year, most of our work referrals were referred to us by ALONE, Social Work Departments of Dublin City Council and the Health Service Executive. We do an assessment visit for each request received and we have a meeting after each to make a common decision, discuss and plan all our future projects. Visits and jobs are carried out on Saturday morning only. We also have a healthy social programme with regular outings.

In 2018 the group had 10 active and very committed volunteers. Our group is mixed in gender and age and come from all parts of the world. We received 25 requests for assistance of which 20 were assessed and 10 completed.

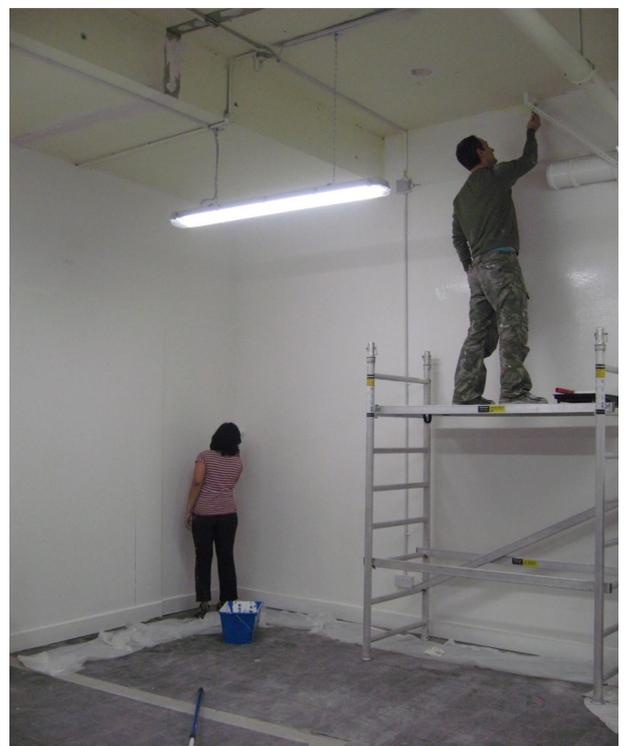
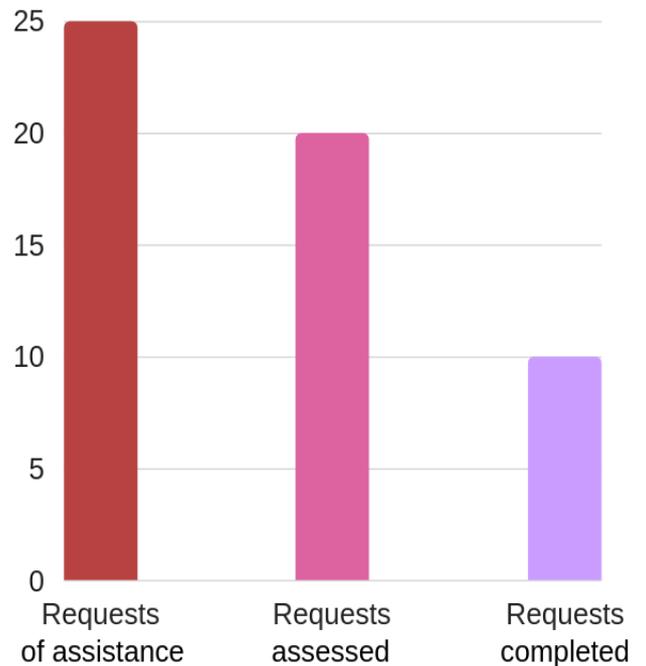
These projects have taken place all across the city and were very varied:

- Painting the hallway, stairs and landing of an elderly couple in Artane
- De-cluttering part of a kitchen in a house in Rathmines
- Cutting an overgrown back garden in Coolock

Our proudest achievement this year was to help a lovely lady referred to us by ALONE in February 2018. Our great team gathered to scrub the ceilings, paint the walls, clean the appliances, mend a skirting board gap and give an overall clean to the room.

Our 2019 objective is to keep doing good and necessary local work in a fun and enjoyable atmosphere. More details on the group can be found on our website [www.dublinlocalgroup.org](http://www.dublinlocalgroup.org) or you can email us at [dlg@dublinlocalgroup.org](mailto:dlg@dublinlocalgroup.org) or contact the VSI office.

The Dublin Local Group.



*“Saturday mornings are no longer spent under a duvet. My fellow decorators are a great gang. It's a laugh to see who'll get the most covered in paint each week.”*

—Conor, DLG Volunteer

# International Seminars and Trainings

This year VSI staff and members have participated in the following trainings and seminars:



## International Seminar: Volunteering with homeless people, Spain, October 2018

VSI volunteer Tara joined this seminar for her strong interest in working with homeless people. The main objective of the seminar was to promote the visibility of homelessness in European society through local and international volunteering. During the seminar, participants generated some tools and methods that are simple and easy to replicate and use in other organizations, networks, and platforms for the visibility of homelessness in the community.



## Courage and tools to create peace and safety for young people of all genders and sexualities, Greece, September 2018

Two VSI members and members of the Irish trans community, Keeva and Cam attended an SCI seminar in Athens where they took part in a series of workshops. The seminar culminated in the creation of a toolkit for youth workers and activists with information on gender and sexuality as well as workshops aiming to help young people become more active in fighting violence, stereotyping and discrimination towards marginalised groups.



## SCI Exchange Platform Meeting (EPM), Finland, October 2018

Mateja attended a global meeting to reflect on volunteer exchange practices within the SCI network - the EPM 2018 in Finland.

The aims of the meeting were:

- to evaluate volunteer exchanges and quality of IVPs during the 2018 season;
- to share practices connected to IVP and other projects
- to evaluate and plan activities for 2019.

It was an inspiring meeting which gathered representa-



## Communication Matters Training, Hungary, April 2018

Cati Ana upgraded her marketing and communications skills on the Communication Matters training and supported VSI in developing our marketing.



## A new International Executive Committee was elected at the ICM

Helen attended SCI's annual international meeting, the ICM, in December. The ICM is the main decision-making body of SCI. SCI branches and partners from around the world met in Bengaluru in India to discuss activities of 2018, set policy and plan activities for SCI's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in 2020.

## Other Activities that we participated in:



Tom Ryder and friends

### NYCI 50th anniversary celebration event - February 2018

VSI member Tom Ryder attended the 50th Anniversary event of the National Youth Council (NYCI) in February.

The keynote speaker was Minister of Health Simon Harris TD who served on the NYCI board in the past. NYCI launched their anniversary publication '50 Voices from the last 50 years' at the event.

VSI has played an active role in NYCI over the past 30 years with staff and volunteers active in the Equality and Inclusion Support Network, the Specialist Youth Work Organisations Network, the Development Education Working Groups, One World Week and the Interna-



Rafeef Ziadah, spoken word artist

### Dochas Conference - May 2018

Helen attended the Dochas AGM and annual conference 'Changing the Narrative: Building Support for Global Development' held at the Croke Park Conference Centre in May.

Building a dynamic global solidarity movement, the dangers of junk news, and campaigning to influence change were among the topics covered.

### “Dream Unity in the Community” Creative Writing Workshop - July 2018

VSI staff and volunteers joined a creative writing workshop with spoken word poet John Cummins, organised by All Together in Dignity—ATD Fourth World.

We all shared our thoughts about our communities in a creative way and came up with a little piece of poetry. The piece was published in a book “Ireland, I Have A Dream” at a community event on Mountjoy Square in



VSI staff writing poetry

### Designated Liaison Person Training - September 2018

Helen is VSI's Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for Child Protection and Safeguarding, acting as a resource for ensuring that child protection and safeguarding procedures within VSI are followed. In September Helen attended a 3-day DLP training with the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI).

The course included information on the role and responsibilities of the DLP, explored relevant policy and legislation, confidentiality, record-keeping, reporting procedures and engaging positively with parents and families. There was also input from Tusla and An Garda Síochána on the role of the statutory authorities.

## Time to move Ballinasloe and Dublin

These events are a part of Europe-wide Eurodesk campaign which informs young people and those who work with them about opportunities to work, study, train and volunteer in Europe, as well as provide useful local contacts in the area of youth and European information. Eliška attended the Time to Move event in Ballinasloe and gave a presentation about opportunities with VSI and about volunteering experiences. She also enjoyed meeting Marian Harkin, who has served as a Member of the European Parliament from Ireland since 2004.

Mateja gave a presentation at the Dublin Time to Move event where she spoke about local volunteering in an international group as a first step towards volunteering abroad.

## Volunteering Fairs

VSI met with over 850 potential volunteers at volunteering fairs and presentations at universities and colleges around Ireland and Northern Ireland this year.



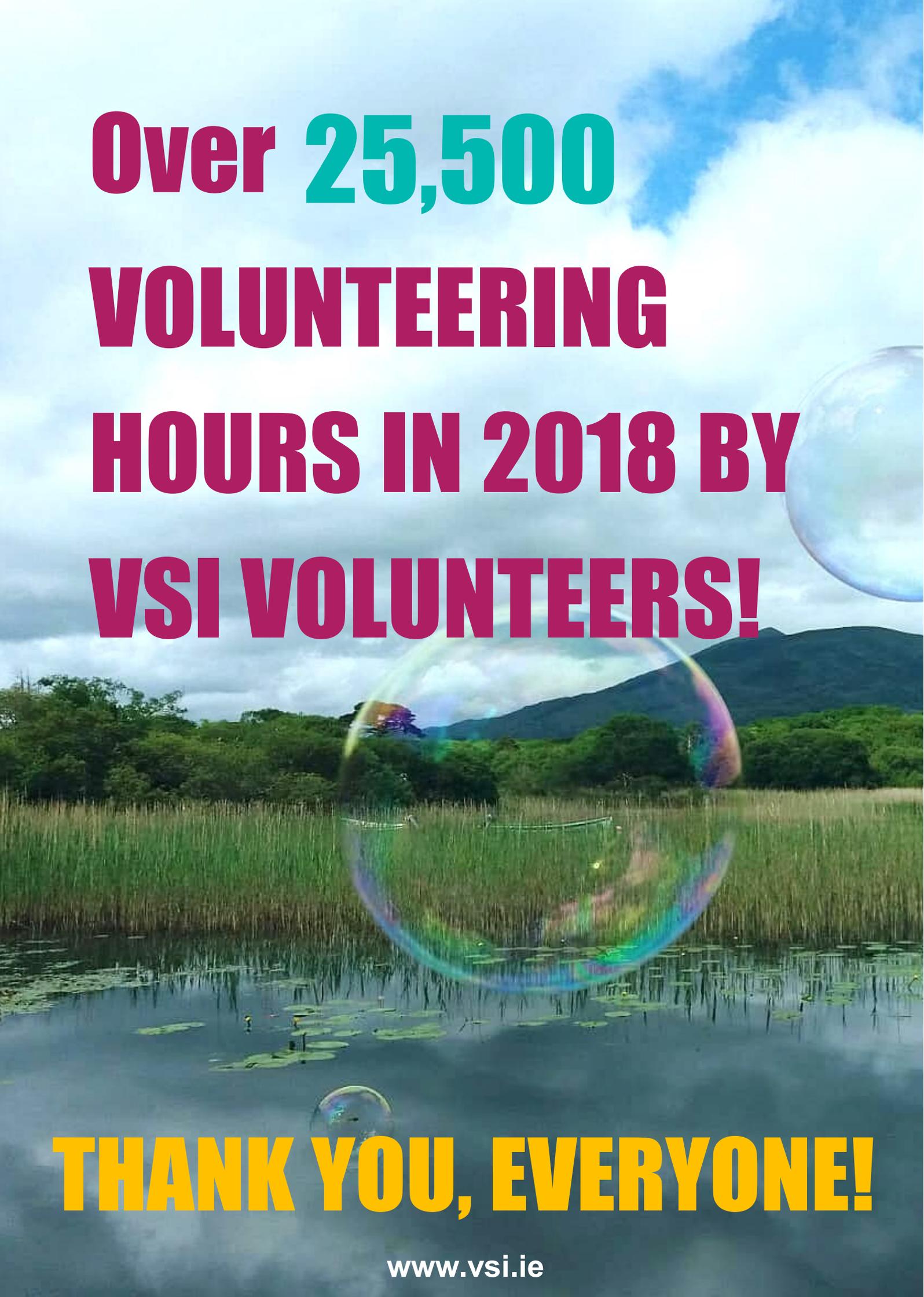
Barry discussing his project at the Irish Aid Fair



Mateja at University College Cork Volunteering Fair



Tara and Lilia meeting with Minister of State for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell O'Connor at IT Tallaght Fair



**Over 25,500  
VOLUNTEERING  
HOURS IN 2018 BY  
VSI VOLUNTEERS!**

**THANK YOU, EVERYONE!**

[www.vsi.ie](http://www.vsi.ie)