

# GLOBAL IVS STATISTICS REPORT 2023



Photo credit: ijgd Oliver Volke Workcamp



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## The IVS Movement – Who We Are

International Voluntary Service (IVS) was initiated in the 1920s when a discussion was started after World War I on how to pursue peace through grass-roots actions, reciprocal international cooperation and non-formal education. Overall, for over a century, IVS exchanges have steadfastly pursued peace through non-violent action, fostering international understanding, mutual respect and transformational solidarity.

IVS nowadays continues to give people in all their diversity the chance to participate in meaningful, productive and socially useful work that is promoting social and climate justice, human rights, sustainability, critical thinking, active participation, democracy, global citizenship, and intercultural learning. It provides people with the means to understand and act in order to positively transform the social, cultural, political and economic structures that affect their lives at all levels. IVS supports collective resilience, acts for transformational solidarity and seeks to create a world of mutual respect and understanding.

Opportunities for international volunteering are organised into short (1 to 29 days), medium (30 to 182 days) and long-term volunteering (6 to 12 months) activities. The projects serve as a basis for dialogue, an opportunity to work according to each person's ability and to practise learning by doing and living together for periods of 1 day up to 1 year.

IVS organisations gather in local, national, regional, continental, intercontinental and global networks. These include **Alliance**, **IBO**, **ICYE**, **NAVO**, **NVDA** and **SCI**. Several of these networks together with other individual IVS organisations form the 177 members of the global network, The Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (**CCIVS**). IVS organisations are present in 79 countries worldwide.

**139 IVS organisations**

shared their data with us



Located in  
**71 countries**



## OUR YEAR 2023 IN NUMBERS

The IVS movement engaged  
**15,706 volunteers**

in short, medium, long-term volunteering

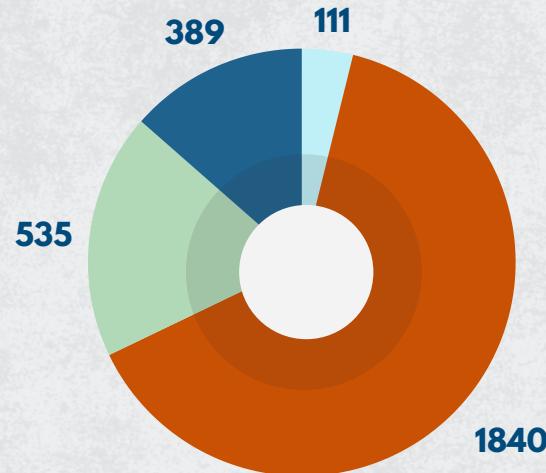


The volunteers contributed  
their work and passion in  
**2,875 projects**

\*As some organisations are members of different networks, the working group set up mechanisms to make sure that data is coherently organised and not duplicated when they reported back to us.

## 03

### TOTAL PROJECTS ORGANISED IN 2023



According to Global Statistics 2023, **2,875 projects** were organised.

- VSTV (1 - 6 days)**
- STV (7 - 29 days)**
- MTV (30 - 182 days)**
- LTV (over 182 days)**

### BASED ON THEMES



**594 ENVIRONMENTAL**



**93 HUMAN RIGHTS**



**396 DEVELOPMENTAL**



**292 OTHERS**



**199 CULTURAL**



**797 UNKNOWN**

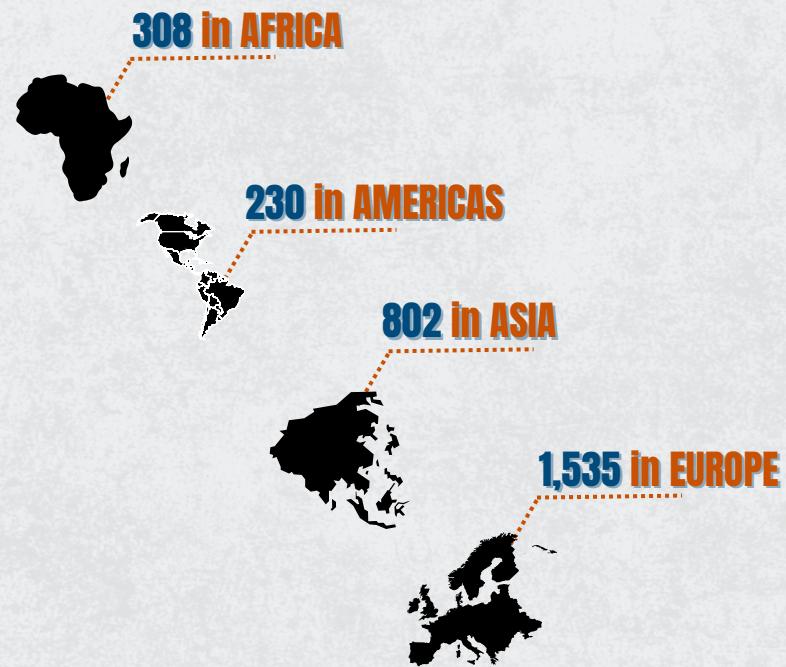


**504 EDUCATIONAL**



More details are available at this [Annex](#)

### BASED ON REGIONS



## **VSTV and STV**

### **(Very Short and Short Term Volunteering, 1-29 Days)**

A (short term) workcamp is a short-term volunteer programme where individuals from diverse backgrounds collaborate on community-focused projects, usually related to social, environmental, or cultural causes. These camps foster intercultural exchange and solidarity, typically lasting from a few days to several weeks.

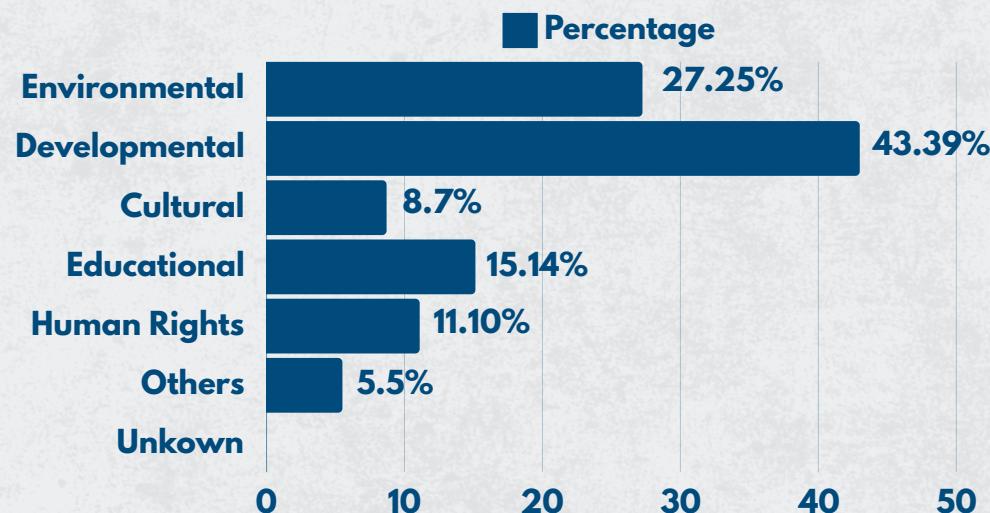
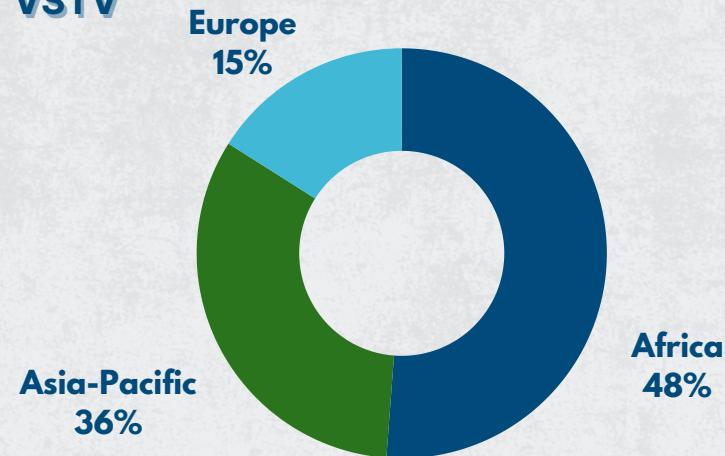
Short Term Workcamps include **Very Short-Term Volunteering (VSTV)**, which lasts 1 to 6 days, and **Short-Term Volunteering (STV)**, lasting 7 to 29 days. These projects bring together participants from multiple countries to collaborate on specific efforts, fostering intercultural exchange and understanding while creating meaningful impacts within a short time frame.

In 2023, **VSTV** projects were reported as follows: 48 in Africa, 48 in Asia, and 15 in Europe. These focused on various topics including Environment (27), Development (43), Culture (8), Education (15), Human Rights (11), Others (5) and Unknown (2).

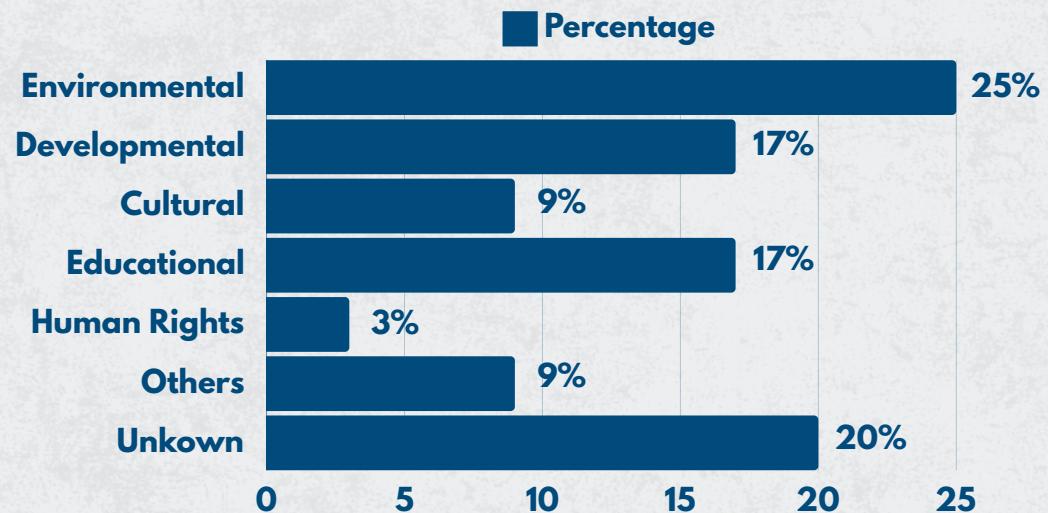
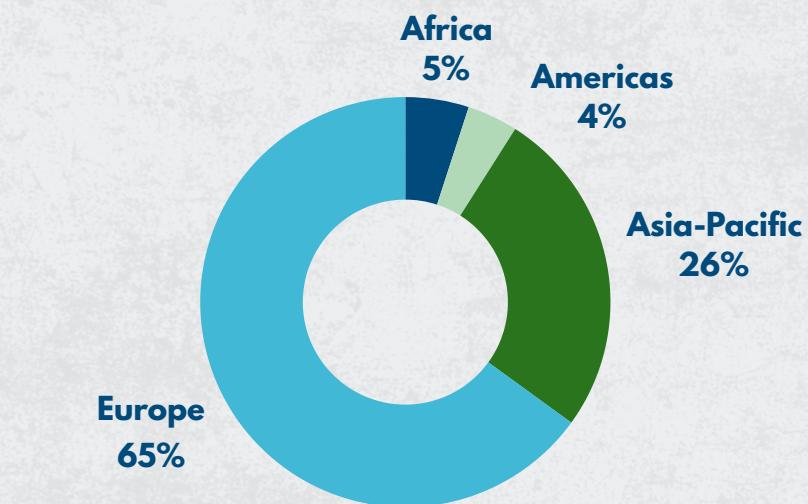
For **STV**, there were 97 projects in Africa, 78 in the Americas, 471 in Asia, and 1194 in Europe. They addressed areas such as Environment (463), Development (307), Culture (174), Education (321), Human Rights (54), Others (157), and Unknown (364).

## VSTV and STV (Very Short and Short Term Volunteering, 1-29 Days)

### VSTV



### STV



## MTV

### (Medium-Term Volunteering, 30-182 Days)

Medium-Term Volunteering (MTV) involves placements lasting between 30 and 182 days, allowing volunteers to engage more deeply in a variety of projects. These opportunities provide a platform to support **peacebuilding**, **human rights**, and the **inclusion** of marginalised communities.

In 2023, **MTV** projects were distributed across 96 in Africa, 64 in the Americas, 164 in Asia, and 211 in Europe. These covered topics such as Environment (79), Development (24), Culture (15), Education (105), Human Rights (17), Other (114) and Unknown (180).

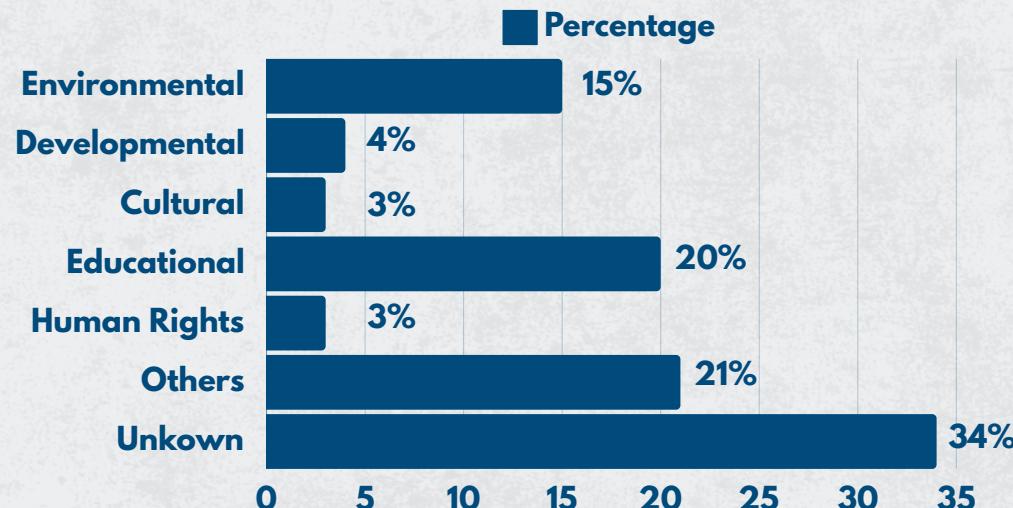
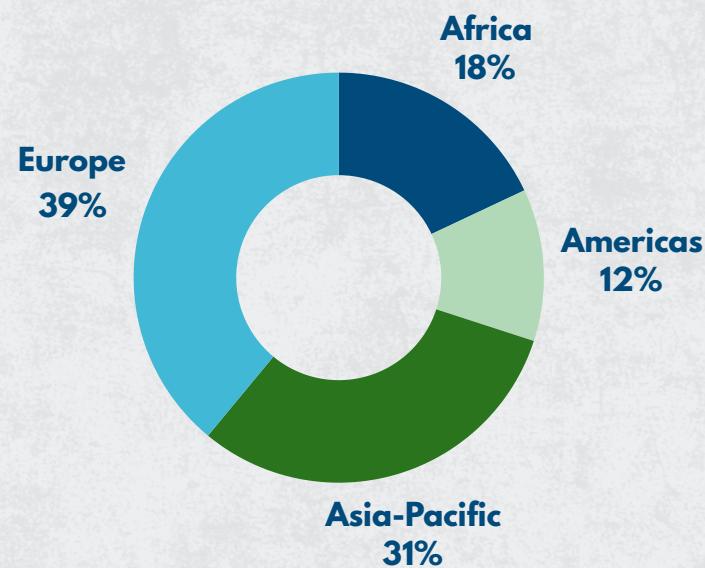
## LTV

### (Long-Term Volunteering, 182+ Days)

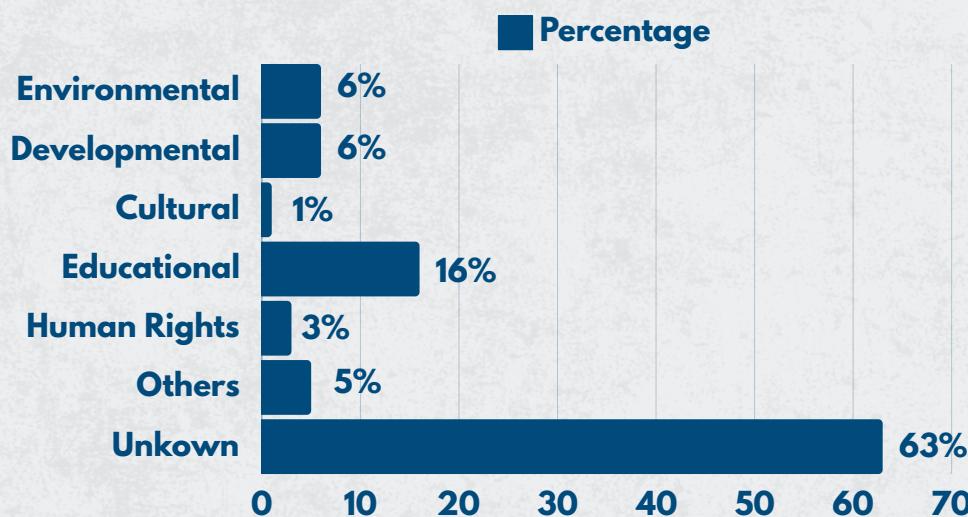
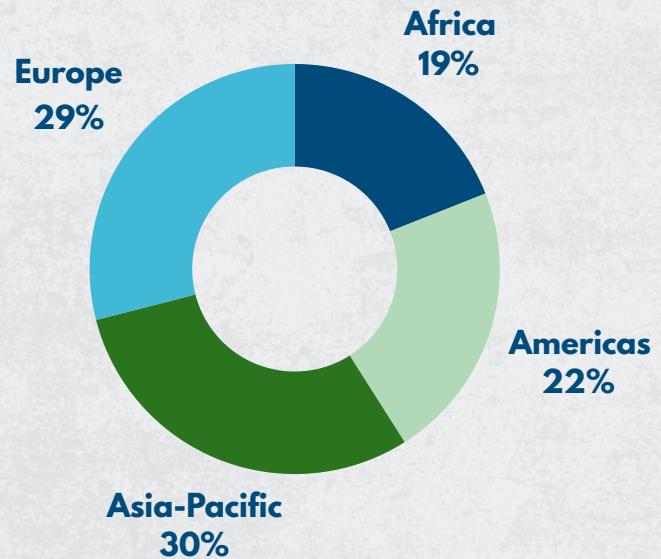
Long-Term Volunteering (LTV) refers to projects lasting over 182 days, typically requiring specialised skills and deeper involvement with local communities. LTV volunteers often take on leadership roles and contribute significantly to long-term community development.

In 2023, **LTV** projects included 77 in Africa, 88 in the Americas, 117 in Asia, and 115 in Europe. Covering areas such as Environment (25), Development (23), Culture (3), Education (64), Human Rights (11), Others (21) and Unknown (251).

## MTV (Medium-Term Volunteering, 30-182 Days)



## LTV (Long-Term Volunteering, 182+ Days)



## VOLUNTEERS PROFILE

### Gender

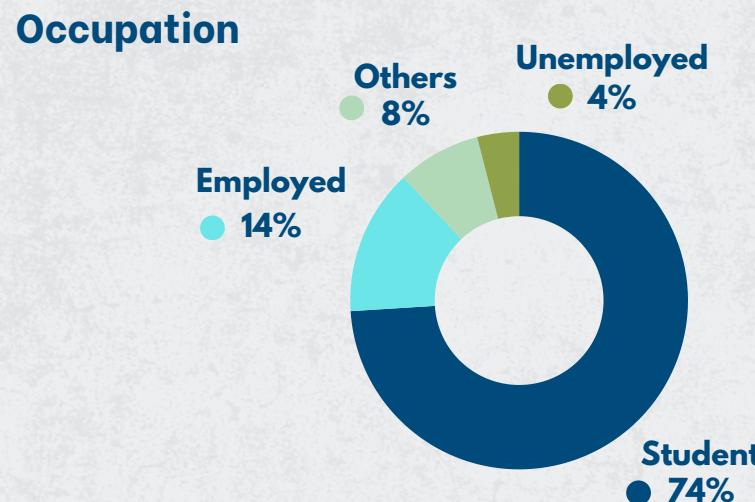
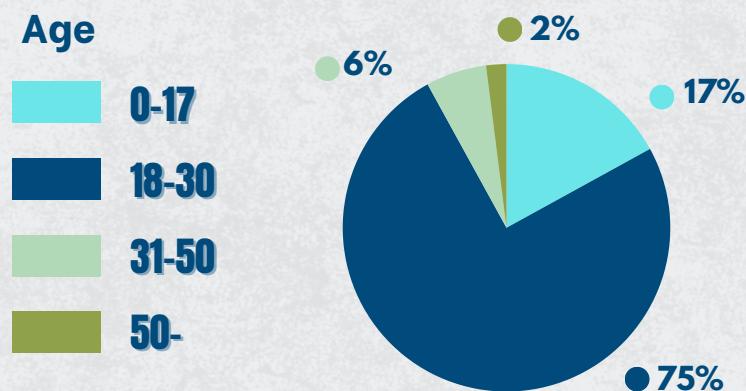
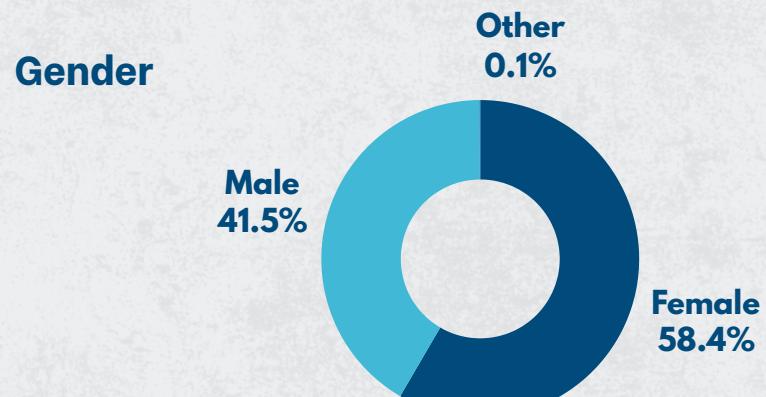
The graph shows the share of different genders on IVS projects in 2023. Although the share of other gender is 0.1% on a global scale, it is worth mentioning that 13 volunteers openly identified as other gender.

### Age

The next graph shows the age of volunteers. Three quarters of all volunteers within our networks were aged between 18 and 30 years old. The second-biggest share is made up by volunteers up to 17 years old. Volunteers older than 51 years of age represent just 2 % of all volunteers.

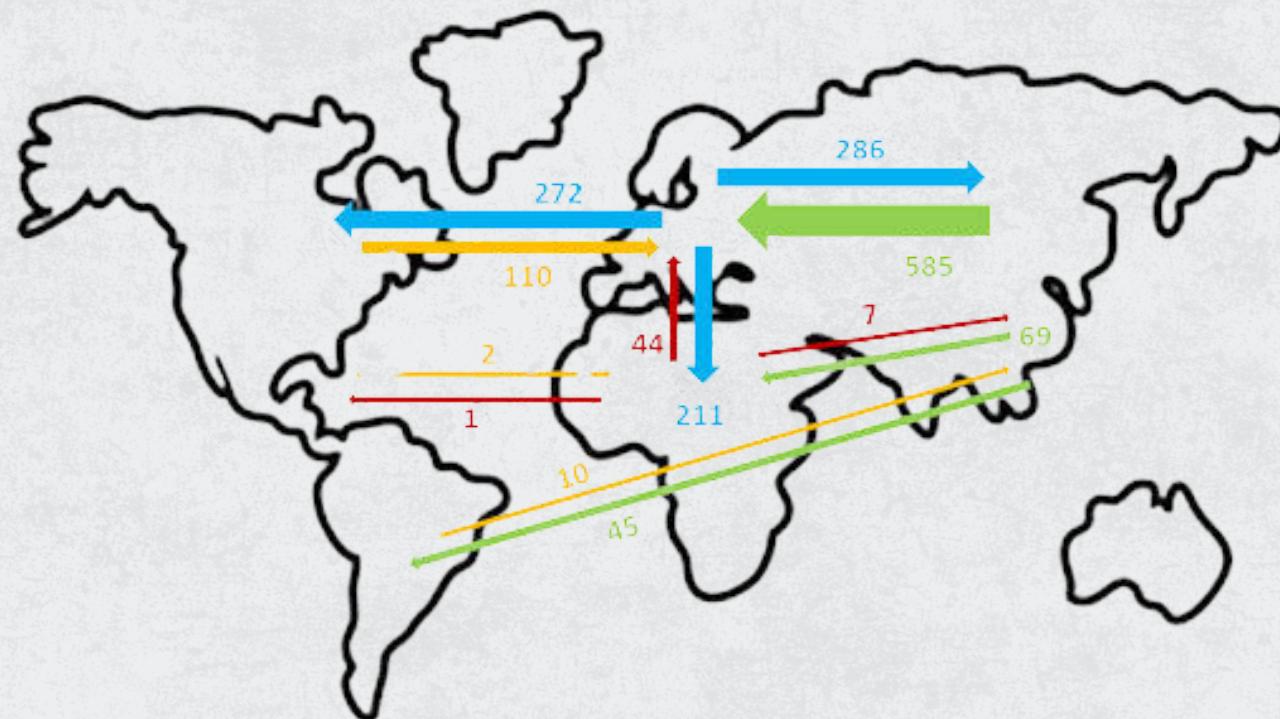
### Occupation

On the third graph, you can see the share of volunteers with different occupations. Almost three quarters were students (74 %). The second biggest share were employed volunteers. Unemployed volunteers represent just 4 % of all volunteers.



## Destinations

The last graph represents the movement of volunteers around the world. For the purpose of this report we categorised just 4 continents: Europe, Africa, Americas, Asia Pacific. You can see which continents are receiving more volunteers and at the same time which continents send the most volunteers. The wider the arrow, the more volunteers travelled there. The graph doesn't cover volunteers who travelled just within one continent – the numbers are shown in a table below.



The following table shows the number of volunteers who took up intraregional volunteering opportunities – this includes the participation of national volunteers in the international workcamps.

AFRICA	AMERICAS	ASIA PACIFIC	EUROPE
628	85	1169	5749

# 05

## CHANGES SINCE 2016

### Numbers of Projects organised

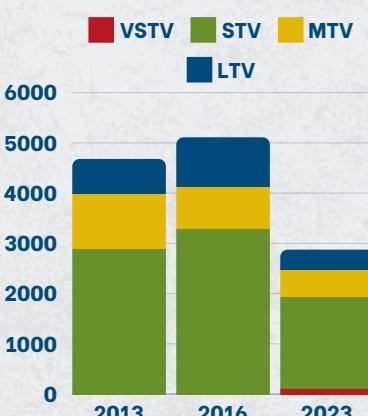
The total number of projects decreased to 56% compared to 2016. LTVs saw a sharper decline, dropping to 39%, while MTVs decreased to 65%.

Project numbers across all continents fell to 51% - 52%, except for Europe which experienced a smaller decline reaching 62%.

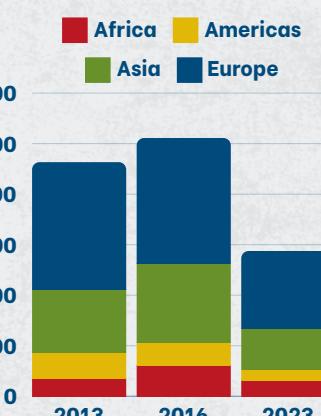
### Rate of Length/ Regions/ Themes organised

LTV decreased 19% to 13%, MTV increased 16% to 19% while STV kept a big majority (65% to 64%). Asia decreased 31% to 28% while Europe increased 49% to 53% and Africa/ Americas kept the same. Environment increased 25% to 29% (biggest rate in all themes) while culture decreased 20% to 10%.

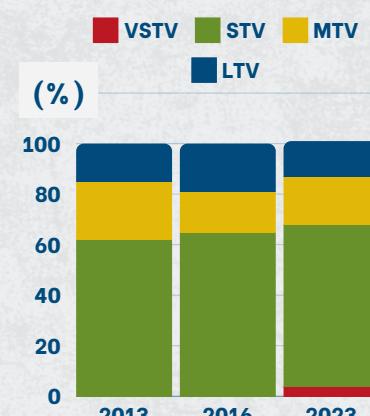
Projects by length



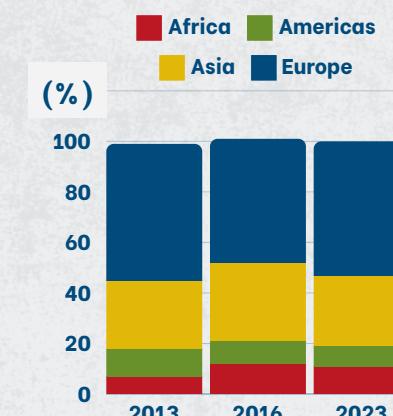
Projects by region



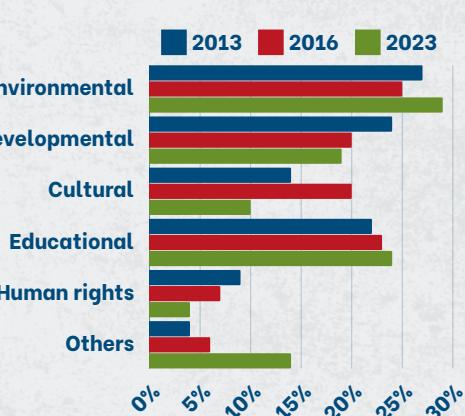
Rate of length (projects)



Rate of region (projects)



Rate of theme (projects)



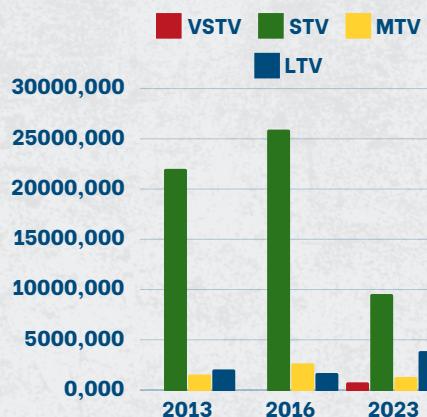
## Volunteers participated

The total number decreased to 51% in comparison to 2016. STVs decreased to 36% while LTVs increased to 228%. There was a sharp decline in Asia of 22%, in Africa of 40%, in Europe of 60% while the Americas showed substantial growth increasing to 147%.

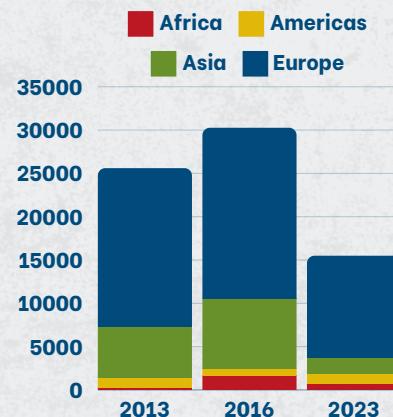
## Rate of Length/ Regions/ Sex/ Age/ Occupations participated

LTV increased 6% to 25% while VSTV+STV decreased 86% to 66% and MTV stayed the same (8% to 9%). Asia decreased 27% to 12%, Africa 6% to 5%, while Americas increased 3% to 8%, Europe 65% to 76%. Female and male balance was exactly the same as 2016 (58%:42%). Aged 0-17 increased 9% to 17%, over 50 0% to 2% while 31-50 decreased 11% to 6%, 18-30 79% to 75%. Students increased 72% to 74% while Employed decreased 17% to 14%, Unemployed 6% to 4%.

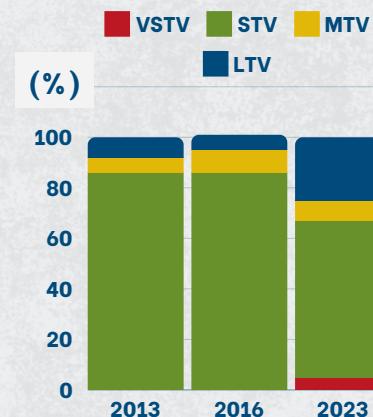
### Vols. by length



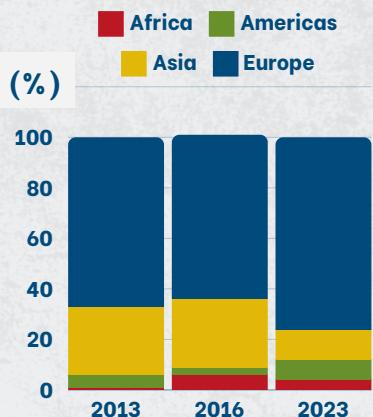
### Vols. by regions



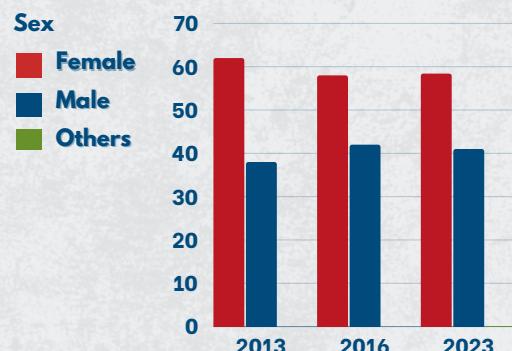
### Rate of length (Vols.)



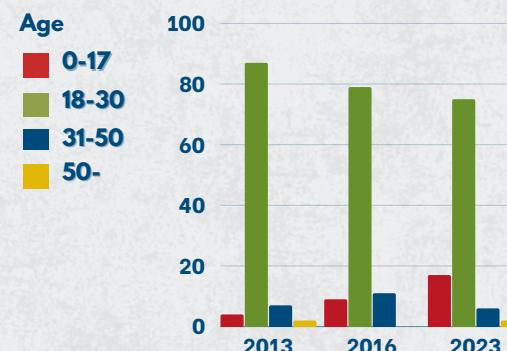
### Rate of regions (Vols.)



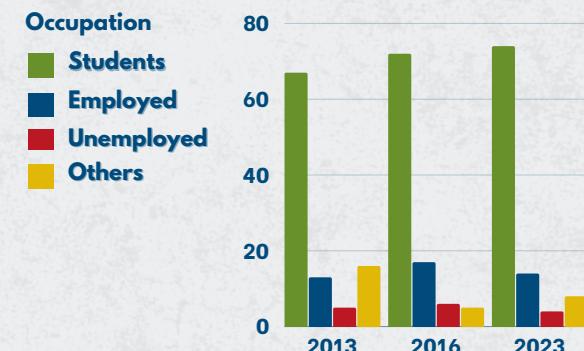
### Rate of sex (Vols.)



### Rate of age group (Vols.)



### Rate of occupation (Vols.)



## COUNTRY'S RANKING IN 2023

### PROJECTS

310		Vietnam
273		Belgium
270		Iceland
236		Germany
179		France

### TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

3870		Germany
1578		France
1207		Italy
1052		Mexico
1033		Japan



## COUNTRY'S RANKING IN 2016

### PROJECTS

759		France
400		Germany
332		India
271		Japan
202		Iceland

### TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

6236		France
2660		Spain
1906		Vietnam
1900		Japan
1805		Germany



### OUTGOING

### NATIONAL

Italy		Germany
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Mexico		France
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Germany		Morocco
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France		Spain
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Japan		Japan
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### OUTGOING

### NATIONAL

France		France
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Spain		Vietnam
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Korea		Japan
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Italy		Spain
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Germany		Tunisia
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## CONCLUSION

The year 2023 marked a pivotal moment for the International Voluntary Service (IVS) movement as it continued to recover from the significant disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. While the total number of volunteers and projects has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, the resilience of IVS organisations across the globe is evident. With 15,706 volunteers contributing to 2,875 projects in 71 countries, the IVS community has shown its ability to adapt and persevere in the face of challenges.

The data collected underscores the IVS movement's ongoing commitment to addressing pressing global issues such as environmental sustainability, community development, human rights, and intercultural learning. Notably, while short-term volunteering (STV) continues to dominate, there has been a significant rise in long-term volunteering (LTV), reflecting a growing interest in more sustained and impactful engagement.

Regionally, Europe remains the most active hub for volunteer activities, but significant contributions from Africa, Asia, and the Americas highlight the truly global nature of the IVS network. Moreover, the IVS movement continues to attract a young and diverse volunteer base, with three-quarters of participants aged 18 to 30, and a significant share being students.

However, the comparison with 2016 shows that the movement is undergoing significant transformations. While there has been an overall decline in the number of projects and volunteers, there are positive signs of growth in regions like the Americas, and in long-term volunteering efforts. The emphasis on environmental projects also signals a shifting focus towards global sustainability efforts.

As we move forward, it is crucial for IVS organisations to build on this momentum, further innovating and adapting to the evolving global landscape. Listening to volunteers, collecting valuable impact measurement and evaluations, building on feedback from young people about new trends, being adaptable and reactive, strengthening partnerships, fostering intercultural exchange, and prioritising social and climate justice will ensure that IVS continues to play a vital role in creating a more just, inclusive, and sustainable world. The lessons learned from this year offer valuable insights as we work collectively towards revitalising the IVS movement and expanding its global impact in the coming years.



**Thank you to the contributors of this report:**

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Editors: Kaizawa Shinichiro, Vicky Lovelock

Design by Hani Nurlina