

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Volunteer Service Now in Every County in Ireland**

#### **Levels of Volunteering Hold Steady Despite Uptick in Economy**

Roscommon Volunteering Information Service is delighted to announce that there is now a volunteering service in every county in Ireland. Following the launch of Wexford Volunteering Information Service earlier this month, there are now 21 Volunteer Centres and 8 Volunteering information Services covering the Republic of Ireland.

This is a particularly important development given that 17% of people said they had been put off volunteering as they didn't know what volunteering opportunities are out there, according to the latest Irish Charity Engagement Monitor (ICEM) by nfpSynergy. Volunteer Centres and Volunteering Information Services are a vital support to those looking to volunteer but aren't sure how to go about it or what they'd like to do.

Of those who don't volunteer, 25% said they would be attracted by volunteering opportunities that don't require a specific time commitment and a further 21% said the availability of microvolunteering opportunities (volunteering that only takes a few minutes) would make them consider volunteering in the future. The network of Volunteer Centres and Volunteering Information Services help address this need by working with volunteer involving organisations and advising them on developing roles that meet the changing needs of potential volunteers.

According to Linda Sice, Roscommon Volunteering Information Service Manager the timing for achieving national coverage couldn't have been better. "As a network, we are delighted to have reached full coverage across Ireland. While volunteering levels have remained stable over the last number of years, the motivations and expectations of volunteers have changed significantly. More people are looking for flexible, short term volunteering opportunities. Together with Volunteer Ireland and our fellow Volunteer Centres and Volunteering Information Services, we support both volunteers and organisations to address these changes and engage in mutually beneficial relationships. Having a volunteering service in every county means that this support is accessible to all in their own area."

Overall, 22% of the population - or just over 1 million people - have volunteered in the last 3 months according to the latest ICEM results. This is similar to November 2013 when 23% volunteered, showing that despite the rise in employment numbers and general uptick in the economy over the last five years, volunteering levels have remained relatively stable.

#### ***For more information:***

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## **Notes to Editor**

### **About Volunteer Ireland**

Volunteer Ireland is the national volunteer development agency and a support body for all local Volunteer Centres and Volunteering Information Services in Ireland. Our vision is every person connected to and participating in their communities to build a better Irish society. Volunteer Ireland works to increase awareness of, access to and quality in volunteering in Ireland. For further information, visit: <http://www.volunteer.ie/>

### **About Volunteer Centres and Volunteering Information Services**

The 21 Volunteer Centres provide a placement service between individuals and groups who want to undertake voluntary activity and organisations that are seeking to involve volunteers. Volunteer Centres are the local leaders in community engagement, supporting and promoting volunteering. The aims of the 8 Volunteering Information Services in Ireland are the same as Volunteer Centres. As Volunteering Information Services are at the first stage of development of a Volunteer Centre, they provide a basic service, hosting a website and providing access to the I-VOL database. For a full list of Volunteer Centres and Volunteering Information Services, please see:

<https://www.volunteer.ie/about-us/vcs-and-viss/find-your-vcvis/>

### **About nfpSynergy and Irish Charity Engagement Monitor**

nfpSynergy is an organisation working in the UK and Republic of Ireland that provides high quality market research and consulting services exclusively for charities and non-profits. Survey base 1,000 adults aged 16+. Source: Irish Charity Engagement Monitor, November 2017, nfpSynergy.

22% of all respondents selected “yes” when asked ““Have you given time as a volunteer to an organisation in the last 3 months?”

17% of people who had not volunteered in the last year (587) selected “I don't know enough about what opportunities are out there to volunteer” from a prompted list when asked “Have any of the following factors put you off volunteering for a charity? Please select as many as apply.”

25% of people who had not volunteered in the last year (587) selected “The availability of volunteer roles that didn't require a specific time commitment” and 21% selected “The availability of microvolunteering opportunities - volunteering that takes just a few minutes, often completed digitally” from a prompted list when asked “Have any of the following factors put you off volunteering for a charity? Please select as many as apply.” “Would any of the following factors make you consider volunteering in the future?”