

THE EUROPEAN VOLUNTEER CENTRE
The Voice for Volunteering in Europe



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Le Porte-Parole du Volont

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World Summit on the Information Society Geneva 2003 and Tu



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International Telecommunication Union World Summit on the Informa

Introduction

The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) World Summit On The Info (WSIS) will take place in Geneva between 10 and 12 December 2003 and in T The Summit will provide a unique opportunity to develop a worldwide vision for society at the highest possible level and is to result in a political declaration at Offering a new interactive approach, the World Summit is tripartite: it seeks to exchange platform between the State, the private sector and civil society.

The Challenge

The global information society is evolving at breakneck speed. The acceleration between telecommunications, broadcasting multimedia and information and communication technologies (ICTs) is driving new products and services, as well as ways of c

and commerce. At the same time, commercial, social and professional opportunities as new markets open to competition and foreign investment and participation is undergoing a fundamental transformation as the industrial society that has rapidly gives way to the information society of the 21st century. This dynamic fundamental change in all aspects of our lives, including knowledge dissemination, interaction, economic and business practices, political engagement, media, education, leisure and entertainment. We are indeed in the midst of a revolution, perhaps humanity has ever experienced. To benefit the world community, the successful growth of this new dynamic requires global discussion (Source: ITU WSIS)

The Opportunity

The World Summit on the Information Society will provide a unique opportunity for stakeholders to assemble at a high-level gathering and to develop a better understanding of the revolution and its impact on the international community. It aims to bring together State, Executive Heads of United Nations agencies, industry leaders, non-governmental organizations, media representatives and civil society in a single high-level event. Various partners (Member States, UN specialized agencies, private sector and ensuring smooth coordination of the practical establishment of the information society on the globe will also be at the heart of the Summit and its preparation (Source: ITU WSIS)

The Anticipated Outcome

The anticipated outcome of the Summit is to develop and foster a clear statement and a concrete plan of action for achieving the goals of the Information Society reflecting all the different interests at stake. The scope and nature of this summit require partnerships with public and private entities, and such partnerships will be in the coming months (Source: ITU WSIS)

Working Group on Volunteering and the New Technologies

A Working Group on "*Volunteering and the New Technologies*" has been established in the framework of the World Summit to ensure that the voice of volunteers is heard in the debate. This Working Group brings together key international, regional and national organizations, centres and other stakeholders to discuss the key messages and to identify the issues they wish to take to the Summit in December 2003. This open-ended group includes the following organisations:




- [International Conference Volunteers \(ICV\)](#)
- [United Nations Volunteers \(UNV\)](#)
- European Volunteer Centre
- [International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies](#)
- [International Association for Volunteer Effort \(IAVE\)](#)
- [CIVICUS](#)

The Working Group has met once to-date (during PrepCom 2 17 to 28 February 2003) and discussed such issues as:

- Bridging the Digital Divide using the volunteer movement (in the North and South)
- Corporate and employee volunteering (bringing business ICT resources to meet the needs of organisations and communities)
- Training for volunteers and volunteer managers on new technologies
- E-volunteering
- Reactivation of some of the websites created in the framework of the International Year of the Volunteer

Volunteers 2001 (these could be regional websites grouping together several
• National Volunteer Centres

CEV would like to stress that this initiative is an open-ended process and parti-
stakeholders are invited to participate and to voice their needs, concerns, pric
This can be done by email, letter, fax etc. CEV therefore invites its member o
others with an interest in this initiative to get in touch with [CEV](#), and to submi
discussion (these may concern the above-mentioned issues but should in no v
them. They are intended as a starting point only for a wider debate).

Both CEV and UNV have prepared two documents intended to launch the deba
be viewed on the [Policy and Research](#) Page of this website as can the present
Hurley, Coordinator on Building E-Communities in Partnership given during a
Panel Discussion at PrepCom 2 of the WSIS. It can also be viewed at the follo
civil society website of the World Summit: <http://www.geneva2003.org/> (click
links). See also the website of International Conference Volunteers for further
initiative [in English](#)  [français](#)  and [español](#) 



UN Declaration of Principles and Action Plan

During the World Summit a Declaration of Principles and Action Plan will be ac
help facilitate the on-going development of the information society as well as
ways to bridge the digital divide and issue benchmarks for doing so.

Both the Declaration of Principles and Action Plan were discussed during Prep
February 2003) and a preliminary version has been issued by Governments. C
Society, a Plan of Action outlining its priorities has also been elaborated which
governmental papers. In this preliminary civil society paper, CEV in collaborat
International Conference Volunteers, UNV, IAVE and CIVICUS have managed
volunteerism into the document.

[Click here](#) to view the inputs of the Working Group on Volunteering and the N
the civil society document.

The Civil Society Bureau

Beuase of the great diversity of civil society, the large number of organisatio
the vast array of interests and perspectives it holds, a Civil Society Bureau wa
PrepCom 2. The role of this Bureau is to facilitate civil society participation in
As a facilitating body, the Bureau addresses questions linked to procedure, lea
issues up to caucuses and thematic working groups, such as the Working Groi
and the New Technologies. The Civil Society Bureau is comprised of various "f
seen to represent different constituencies within global civil society. One of th
"Volunteer Family". For more information on the "Volunteer Family," see the f
[English](#)  [en français](#) 

Each family has an organisational focal point, whose role it is to inform the fai
regarding the evolution of the WSIS preparation process and to facilitate inpu
members into the overall process. Ms. Viola Krebs of [ICVolunteers](#) is currently
point for the Volunteer Family.

We Need You!

If you have an interest in, or are working in the field of volunteering and new

are interested in this initiative, we would like to hear from you! We need people to contribute their views to an email discussion and/or can dedicate time and energy at the national and/or regional level to promote WSIS and bring forward volunteer projects in their countries (since there may be a small number of grants available in the context of the WSIS process for international and regional projects related to the theme of volunteering and ICT technologies). Please contact [CEV](#) or Ms. Viola Krebs of [ICVolunteers](#).
