

## THE POTENTIAL OF EMPLOYEES ONLINE VOLUNTEERING IN ROMANIA

Doina DANAIATA<sup>1</sup>  
Diana Corina GLIGOR-CIMPOIERU<sup>2</sup>  
Luminita HURBEAN<sup>3</sup>  
Valentin MUNTEANU<sup>4</sup>

---

### ABSTRACT

We have started our research based on the hypothesis that although the concept of online volunteering has a history of more than 30 years (Cravens, 2006) it seems not to be very well known and used in Romania. On the other side, Corporate Social Responsibility programs have gained popularity in our country in recent years and we were interested in analysing the connection existing between the three concepts of CSR – Corporate Volunteering – Online Volunteering along with their impact in the new context in which social media plays an increasingly important part. We have analyses which are main entities with implications on and from online volunteering and we have determined the potential benefits and the potential concerns or threats presented by online volunteering for these entities. Based on this analysis we have formulated recommendations for managers on how to use the potential of online volunteering in the context of employee management. Our applicative research was focused on identifying and analysing the online component of corporate volunteering programs recently implemented in Romania and we have reached to the conclusion that the use of the potential of online volunteering should be enhanced, especially with the help of the new tools offered by social media.

**KEYWORDS:** corporate social responsibility, mission-based organizations, online volunteering, prosocial behaviour on Internet, social media

**JEL CLASSIFICATION:** A13, D64, M14

---

### 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the main reasons we have chosen these theme of research is that although the online volunteering has a history of more than 30 years (Cravens, 2006) we think that the concept is little known and even more, scarcely used in Romanian business organizations. One of the challenges we try to address is *why or even if, Romanian employees should do online volunteering?* The motivations of the applying volunteer are often quite personal (Bezmalinovic Dhebar & Stokes, 2008) but for business organizations interested in using online volunteering work for its variety of benefits it is very important to understand the particularities of this concept in order to ensure a mutual benefit experience for both parties involved.

We think that online volunteering could be the answer for many business organizations, especially ones that are just starting to do business or those who are founded on the principles of the increasingly popular concept of social economy, but only with a proper management this kind of activities will be really successful and not just a waste of time and energy.

---

<sup>1</sup> West University of Timișoara, Romania, doina.danaiata@feaa.uvt.ro

<sup>2</sup> West University of Timișoara, Romania, diana.gligor@feaa.uvt.ro

<sup>3</sup> West University of Timișoara, Romania, luminita.hurbean@feaa.uvt.ro

<sup>4</sup> West University of Timișoara, Romania, valentin.munteanu@feaa.uvt.ro

## 2. THE CONCEPT OF ON LINE VOLUNTEERING

On line volunteering is seen by several authors like Rheingold (1993) or Amichai-Hamburger (2007) as part of the natural evolution of Internet, since it was conceived and developed by a group of volunteers who believed that knowledge should be easily accessible and free of charge. So, we could state, that if the Internet as we know it is the result of an online volunteering project, then the online volunteering should and could play a major part in the future of both the Internet and the volunteering activities. We think that the Internet could provide in the future new means for the involvement in determining social change and reducing social and economic gaps between countries and individuals.

The concept of online volunteering is linked to several other concepts that are beginning to play an increasingly important part in the new way business organizations want or have to interact with their stakeholders, concepts like *corporate social responsibility (CSR)* or *social media*.

First of all we want to present the connection between the three concepts: corporate social responsibility – corporate or community volunteering – online volunteering. In the past decades CSR has begin to attract the attention of both practitioners and academics, we think that as a result for a need of change in the way business and its role in communities is perceived. Business is not longer perceived as just having one responsibility of generating profit as according to the famous quote of Milton Friedman from the 1970, but is more and more perceive as a social actor, a citizen of communities, a holder of the responsibility for its employees and other people with whom it interacts in its quest for increased profits. Profits now also have to be maximized but in a long term approach taking in consideration a whole area of stakeholders, not just the shareholders, which makes it a task even more challenging for managers.

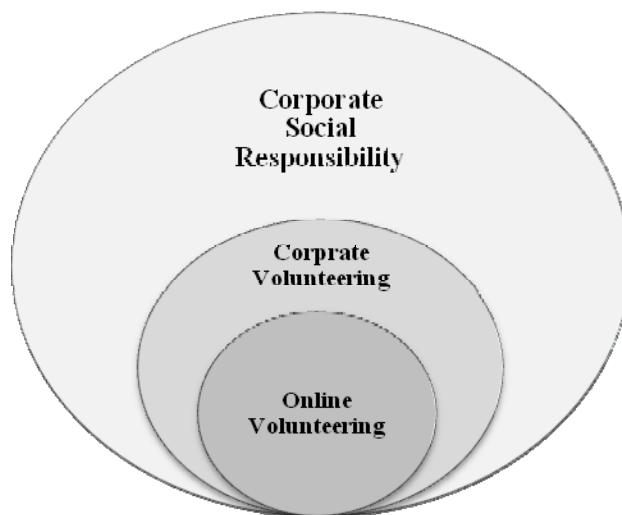
Debates about CSR really means are still going on, ranging from just another public relations instrument to the new essence of business strategies, with lots of definitions, but with a very simple essence: putting people ahead of money. The European Commission has presented an updated definition of CSR in their 2011 new policy on corporate social responsibility as being that enterprises “*should have in place a process to integrate social, environmental, ethical human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders*”, while Gligor (2011) has defined CSR as “*a continuous and voluntary engagement toward the stakeholders of a business organization for obtaining profits in an ethical manner, with respect for people, community and the natural environment*”.

Kotler and Lee (2005) have identified six types of CSR programs: *cause promotions, cause-related marketing, corporate social marketing, corporate philanthropy, community volunteering, and socially responsible business practices*. The authors define *community volunteering* as an initiative through which a business organization supports and encourages its employees or business partners to donate their time to support organizations and causes of local community. Underlining one of the aspects of this definition, we find it right to make an observation regarding one of the theoretical aspects of our paper: in our work we use the term of *communities* to underline the fact a business organization can support both causes from its *local* community or from *foreign* communities, especially using online volunteering that makes it even easier to interact with international causes and organizations.

Corporate volunteering can also attract valuable employees for a business organization. There are studies showing at an international level a raise of the number of employees who declare that they are proud of their company’s values as a result of being involved in corporate social responsibility programs. Even more, studies undertaken in the United States of America cited by Kotler and Lee (2005) have shown that approximately 76% of the employees have declared that the involvement of the business organization in solving some social issues counted in their choice of a work place and more than 80% of the respondents would refuse to be hired in companies if they knew that this

companies are not "good citizens". More recent studies in this field could show as how / if these positions of the employees have changed due to the global crisis.

The alternative name for community volunteering is *corporate volunteering* defined as *businesses supporting and encouraging staff involvement in the community for mutual benefit* (Corporate Volunteering Literature Review, available at <http://www.Volunteeringnz.org.nz/businessandcorporate/>). To better explain the link between CSR, corporate volunteering and online volunteering we have elaborated the following graphical representation:



**Figure 1. The link between CSR – Corporate Volunteering – Online Volunteering**

The rise of **social media** is also playing an important part in the impact that online volunteering could have. Social Media is contributing to the return to prominence of what is called 'the gift economy'. As social networks and online communities grow, values such as sharing, openness and collaboration are increasingly governing our relationships and the connections between us. According to Patrick Daniels (<http://www.e-volunteerism.com/quarterly/09oct/09oct-daniels>), social media facilitates volunteerism and other giving activities on a grand new scale, with the assistance of recent developments in technology, critical mass usage and more visibility. Yet even as our social lives move online, Daniels argues that the field of volunteerism seems ambivalent about this increasingly social web and unsure about how to harness its potential for the benefit of volunteering programs.

### **2.1. Conceptual approaches on online volunteering**

Online volunteering was defined by Cravens (2006) as "*volunteer activities that are completed, in whole or in part, via the Internet on a home, work, or public access computer, usually in support of or through a mission-based organization (non-profit, NGO, civil society, etc.)*".

From this definition we could already identify few important characteristics of online volunteering, the first one being that online volunteering could be a standalone volunteering activity, or just one of the other volunteering activities. Online volunteering could be just a part of a volunteering project, or could consist entirely on online activities. Amichai-Hamburger (2007) is making an interesting distinction between *prosocial behaviour face-to-face* and *prosocial behaviour online*. First of all, the prosocial behaviour could be defined as "*voluntary actions that are intended to help or benefit another individual or group of individuals*" (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989, in Amichai-Hamburger, 2007). Amichai-Hamburger (2007) is identifying several common points for the prosocial behaviour face-to-face and the prosocial behaviour online: (1) *there is no previous connection between the volunteer and the recipient of the service*; (2) *there is no expectation of any kind of reciprocity*; and (3) *the requests for help come at random times*.

Another aspect regarding the concept of online volunteering that we could identify from its definition formulated by Cravens (2006) and presented above is that it could be an initiative belonging to an individual, to a company or to a public or other mission-based organization. And in here we could set some limits for our research, by concentrating primarily on the activities of online volunteering initiated or supported by business organizations.

And one final observation that we will make about online volunteering, starting from Cravens definition presented above, is that in online volunteering mission based organizations play an important part, so for business organizations that want to get involved in this kind of volunteering is important to take in consideration a partnership with a mission-based organization.

Effectively, online volunteering consists in activities like: translation, research, Web site design, data analyses, database construction, online discussion facilitation or moderation, proposal writing, production of articles, online mentoring/coaching/tutoring, professional advice, curriculum development, and publication design (Cravens, 2006), running online projects, translating important materials from one language to another, offering legal support, designing websites which help populations in need, creating study materials for online use (Amichai-Hamburger, 2007), functional or operational activities (technology support, fundraising, communications, marketing, and so on), management consulting or advice, and, less frequently, mission-related program activities (research, writing, editing, e-mail discussion group leadership, and so on) according to Bezmalinovic Dhebar & Stokes (2008).

The instruments used for online volunteering are the e-mails in most of the cases, but other means like instant messagins, groups of dicusion, social networks or even telephone conversations can prove to be useful for managers to better coordinate online volunteers.

## 2.2. Entities involved in online volunteering

Several web sites are available for finding information regarding online volunteering and applying for it. For instance, one of these sites *www.onlinevolunteering.org*, mentioned by Cravens (2006), is the online platform through which the United Nations Volunteers program (UNV), part of the UN Development Program (UNDP) is matching volunteers with various organizations around the globe. Bezmalinovic Dhebar & Stokes (2008) cite the UNV program, but also two other websites: *Idealist.org* and *Volunteermatch.org* that connect potential volunteers with all types of organizations.

Essentially we could identify three main entities involved in online volunteering activities that influence and could be influenced by this results: the volunteers, the organizations (for-profit or mission-based organizations) and the communities. Volunteering activities, and implicitly the online volunteering, could be found at the interference point between the interactions of these entities, as shown in **Figure 2**:



**Figure 2. The interference point for entities involved in online volunteering**

An important role in online volunteering is played by **volunteer centres** that act like brokers in the field of volunteering. Traditionally brokerage is a term used to describe the activities of 'go-betweeners' or 'bridge-builders' that arrange transactions between different parties. In the context of employer supported volunteering a broker is often described as an agency that can help an employer find the right volunteering opportunities for their staff. Brokers help build bridges between the 'providers' of employee volunteer services (employees and employers) and the 'consumers' of these services (community organizations and service users). In doing so brokers need to be able to collect relevant information, collate it and disseminate it to third parties.

### **3. OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS REGARDING ON LINE VOLUNTEERING**

Volunteering is considered to have a positive impact both on the volunteer, by developing hers/his social competences and practical abilities, and also on the community and the society in general "being a source of multiplication of social networks based on cooperation and mutual trust" (The National Agenda for volunteering in Romania 2012-2020, 2011). Volunteering is also very important for international cooperation and humanitarian aids. For the current paper our interest is focused on the potential opportunities and threats regarding online volunteering also for business organizations and we have tried to present them in a systemized manner in the following paragraphs.

#### **3.1. Potential benefits regarding online volunteering**

Some authors perceive the Internet as "yet another technological innovation that causes a further widening of the gap between rich and poor" where "the individual access to information and communication technology is frequently determined by social background" (Amichai-Hamburger, 2007). From this point of view, we could state that online volunteering has the great merit of having the potential of contributing in some way at the reduction of this digital gap between those highly qualified, with access at informational resources and education, and those in need but less fortunate. According to Bezmalinovic Dhebar & Stokes (2008) "remote, small, or start-up organizations may find it easier to recruit and engage volunteers online", especially skilled professionals beyond their home geography, when a quick solution to staffing problems is needed or when the expertise could not be afforded otherwise.

Volunteermatch, a well known non-profit organisation in the field of volunteering, made a synthesis of the benefits of online volunteering taking in consideration the specific advantages for the three main entities involved in this process: employee, corporation and community (available at <http://www.volunteermatch.org/corporations/resources/businesscase.jsp>). We have considered their classification for the benefits of online volunteering as a starting point in-out analysis, adapting it and adding items for each category, adding additional bibliography resources like Bezmalinovic Dhebar & Stokes (2008), resulting in the following synthesis presented in Table 1:



**Table 1. Online Volunteering Potential Benefits**

<b>Benefits for the Employee Volunteers</b>	<b>Benefits for the Corporations</b>	<b>Benefits for Communities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improves performance, job satisfaction, attitude and morale</li> <li>• Encourages teamwork</li> <li>• Promotes leadership and skill development</li> <li>• Improves communication between employees and their supervisors, and across departments</li> <li>• It is an opportunity for those employees who are limited by schedule, distance, or physical disability</li> <li>• Better results for employees with a higher social anxiety to attract them to this kind of activities</li> <li>• Improvement of existing skills or the opportunity for developing new ones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds brand awareness and affinity</li> <li>• Strengthens trust and loyalty among consumers</li> <li>• Enhances corporate image and reputation</li> <li>• Improves employee retention</li> <li>• Increases employee productivity and loyalty</li> <li>• Is a tactical solution to solve immediate operational or staffing problems</li> <li>• Provides an effective vehicle to reach strategic goals</li> <li>• Managers can train volunteers to train other new volunteers</li> <li>• Managers use online volunteers to handle tasks that they could not have afforded otherwise or to use skills that were not geographically available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides skilled and talented volunteer pool, as employees devote personal and professional skills to community needs</li> <li>• Offers direct cost savings for community service organizations in saved recruiting and labour costs</li> <li>• Creates quantifiable social impact</li> <li>• Helps bring community needs into focus</li> <li>• Human resources can be allocated beyond geographical barriers</li> </ul>

### 3.2. Potential concerns or threats regarding online volunteering

First on the potential concerns we have identified is a concern regarding volunteering in general, and online volunteering in particular: how do you manage to motivate employees to get involved in volunteering, especially when they are paid less than they deserve and are exhausted from work overload resulted from the attempt to reduce costs?

Another important concern regarding volunteering in general, but with a particular case for online volunteering, is the increased need for credibility, security and trust. This is important both for the volunteer and the host organization or cause, especially in the case of online volunteering where little or no contact might exist between

Another concern or thread regarding online volunteering is that it could be less authentic or more impersonal than the "real" volunteering. In fact, employee's volunteering is one Corporate Social Responsibility program perceived as being one of the most authentic one.

Bezmalinovic Dhebar & Stokes (2008) estimate that although "*online volunteering can appear deceptively simple*" very often "*additional planning and management are frequently needed*" in areas like program design, volunteer selection, training, ongoing operations, and evaluation.

In the same manner we have systemised in Table 2 the benefits of online volunteering and also the potential concerns or threats of online volunteering for the same three main entities involved (employee, corporation and community), using our one points of view and sources like

<https://volunteer.ca/content/employer-supported-building-bridge-employer-supported-volunteers> or  
 Bezmalinovic Dhebar & Stokes (2008):

**Table 2. Online Volunteering Potential Concerns and Threats**

Concerns and Threats for the Employee Volunteers	Concerns and Threats for Corporations	Concerns and Threats for Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the poor management or the poor communication in an online volunteering project are a source of dissatisfaction for volunteers</li> <li>• It is a time-consuming or complex process</li> <li>• Lack of recognition of volunteers restrictions (e.g., conflicting work schedules or personal / family commitments)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The objectives of online volunteering programs must be clearly defined</li> <li>• Communication has to work well</li> <li>• Monitoring results is very important</li> <li>• Without proper management, volunteering activities could be done at the cost of the current business activities</li> <li>• If not adequately managed, online volunteers could give up, often without explanation</li> <li>• It is sometimes challenging to determine which of the volunteers applying for an online task is actually more prepared and motivated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security must be checked and assured in online volunteering programs</li> <li>• Corporations could be tempted to overuse volunteering work instead of paid work, thus reducing social contributions for the national budget and offering less stability for the potential employees</li> </ul>

### 3.3. Recommendations for managers willing to use online volunteering

We have identified three principles that an organization willing to use online volunteering should take into consideration: to acknowledge the importance of employee volunteering, to assure the commitment of employees in a volunteering project and to target real social problems and real solutions for them (see Figure 3).

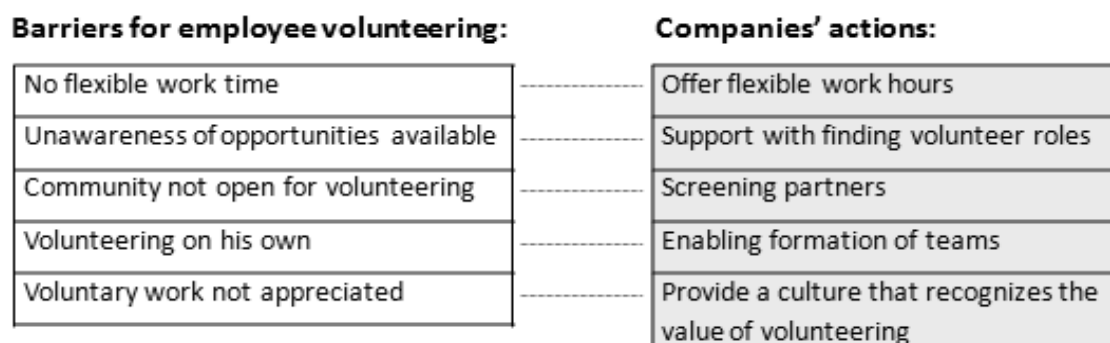


**Figure 3. Principles for successful and sustainable employee volunteer programs**

Starting from Bezmalinovic Dhebar & Stokes (2008) work, we have systemised the following recommendations for those managers willing to integrate online volunteering work into their business organization's work force, undelining the fact that all these recommendations also apply very well for managing the online volunteering employees of a business organization:

- Managers have to clearly define which are the expectations regarding the volunteers;
- They have to make sure that assignments are clear from the beginning, otherwise online volunteers will give up the assignment;
- Managers have to explain to volunteers if their help is needed for a long term or short term assignment;
- In the recruiting step, managers have to make sure that they set the tone for a serious approach of the task, and must select both the better prepared and motivated volunteers;
- Trial work could be set to test the candidates for motivation and abilities and online volunteers seem to appreciate the extra requirements as a proof that their application is being taken seriously by the recruiting organization who is taking the extra time to properly select candidates;
- Asking for written assignments or skills test is thus recommended for selecting volunteers;
- Managers have to make sure that they explain to volunteers the positive impact their work has for achieving certain goals, in order to motivate them;
- It is better if the assignments are time determinate, so that the volunteers could efficiently plan their other activities;
- It is recommended for managers to begin by assigning new online volunteers more reduced tasks as time and intensity, not only to make them more easy to handle, but also to make it easier for them to evaluate the volunteer's abilities and skills;
- Communication is obviously a key element – *"the key to both volunteer retention and performance is communication"* state Bezmalinovic Dhebar & Stoke – and if the communication process is going well, volunteers work more with better results;
- Regular communication, at a set frequency, is highly recommended primarily because it has a reassuring and motivating role for volunteers;
- Communication of the real results of the done work and direct communication with the project's managers are both very important for volunteers;
- For the direct communication between managers and volunteers is not important only the frequency but also the quality of the dialog;
- It is recommended to communicate not only with the accepted volunteers for certain task, but also with the online applicants who were not accepted (a feedback to applicants should be offered within 48 hours) – *"the lack of immediate response from organizations can discourage would-be volunteers and may leave a negative impression of the organization with potential donors and future volunteers"* argue Bezmalinovic Dhebar & Stokes;

We have summarized the main barriers for employee volunteering in Romania and the actions that companies could take in order to remove them that we have presented in Figure 4:



**Figure 4. Barriers for employee volunteering and required actions**



#### 4. ONLINE VOLUNTEERING IN ROMANIA

Unfortunately, after more than 20 years since the communist regime has been abolished, we think that the Romanians view on volunteering is still influenced by the so called "volunteer work" that everybody was forced to do under the old regime, either they wanted or not, as form of substituting for work force without having to pay for it. But at the same time we think that the Romanians attitude toward volunteering has evolved during the past two decades, and especially young people see it now as an opportunity to make connections, gather experience, feel useful and make a change in the community.

The year 2011, The International Year of Volunteering, gave an extraordinary impulse to the development of volunteering (The National Agenda for volunteering in Romania 2012-2020, 2011), one of the main achievements being the adoption of the Volunteering Law in Romania.

According to The National Agenda for volunteering in Romania 2012-2020 (2011) little data is available in our country about how much work is done through volunteering, so it is difficult to estimate the economical impact that volunteering generates as an argument for its importance. The authors of this National Agenda cite the results of a Eurobarometer from 2010 according to whom Romania has approximately 4.4 million volunteers, respectively approximately 20% of the total population and most of them are under 35 years old and still have a connection with the learning system.

Starting from the correlations identified in the theoretical part between the three concepts CSR – Corporate Volunteering – Online Volunteering who are interconnected (see Figure 1), in our applicative research we have followed to identify the current state of use for Corporate Volunteering and Online Volunteering in CSR projects implemented in the past years in Romania.

To document our applicative research we have use the data available on the website [www.responsabilitatesociala.ro](http://www.responsabilitatesociala.ro) on the Case Studies section. We have considered this source as being relevant for reflecting the distribution of CSR projects on fields of activity, the reflected percentages being close to those reported by Ernst & Young (2013) in a recent report called *CSR trends and realities in Romania*. According to this study "most companies focus their CSR projects (25%) on education. This is followed by a similar level of interest for health (18%), social problems (17%) and the environment (16%). Compared to studies from Romania, the Business4Better 2013 survey shows an interest of 60% of American companies with employers between 100-5.000 for the education sector." (Ernst & Young, 2013).

From the synthetic analysis of the information available on [www.responsabilitatesociala.ro](http://www.responsabilitatesociala.ro) we have noticed a similar distribution of CSR projects on different domains (see Figure 5)

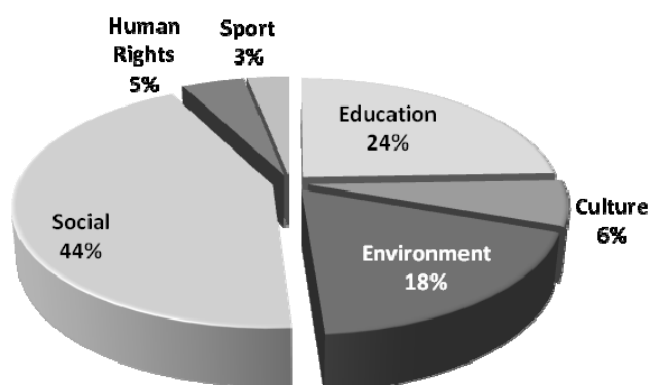
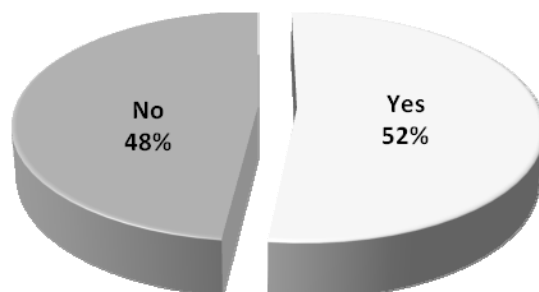


Figure 5. The Distribution of the CSR Projects on Targeted Sectors

From all 131 study cases registered on the analysed website, we have selected those CSR projects with a corporate volunteering component and we have noticed that they reach a percentage of 52%. (see Figure 6).



**Figure 6. Employees involvement in CSR Projects**

In this case our results based on the data available on [www.responsabilitatesociala.ro](http://www.responsabilitatesociala.ro) vary significantly from those presented by the Ernst & Young (2013) study that that "An overwhelming majority, 92% of the companies, involve their employees in CSR activities". We can put in debate their conclusion that "Romanians companies have understood that their employees are more motivated if the company is actively involved in CSR projects." with the mention that for a significant percentage for top managers and CSR professionals from Romanian the involvement of employees is rather declarative.

Regarding the number of employees from companies involved in volunteering activities, the website [www.responsabilitatesociala.ro](http://www.responsabilitatesociala.ro) does not provide the required data. From the Ernst & Young study (2013) we find that "71% of respondents have a person or a team dedicated to CSR projects ...and... the average number of persons involved in a team is 2,6".

Taking our analysis one step further, we have concluded that from all the corporate volunteering programs a total of 24 projects included an online volunteering component, using different forms of online support like: an internal platform, a site dedicated to the CSR project, a thematic blog, a Facebook page (the main social network in Romania) or Twitter, Flickr, Youtube, plus the online press. In Table 3 we present the synthetic reflection of our analysis:

**Table 3. Identifying the online volunteering component of CSR projects in Romania**

Project Title	The Implementing Company	Field of activity	Internal platform	eMail	Site	Facebook	Twitter	Flickr	You tube	Blog	Online press
Parcurile Viitorului	Petrom	Environment	✓	✓	✓	.	.	.	.	.	.
Tu pentru comunitate	Orange Romania	Social	✓	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Campania promisiunilor 2010	Avon Romania	Social	.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	.	.	.
Școala lui Andrei	Petrom	Education	.	✓	✓	.	.	.	.	.	.
Orange-Adept Work Camp, 2005-2007	Orange Romania	Environment	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Donează pentru viață	BRD-Groupe Societe Generale	Social	✓	✓	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

Project Title	The Implementing Company	Field of activity	Internal platform	eMail	Site	Facebook	Twitter	Flickr	You tube	Blog	Online press
Ziua Copilului si a Parintelui in Gradina Botanica	BRD-Groupe Societe Generale	Social	*	*	*	.	.	.	.	.	.
BRD alaturi de UNICEF in Saptamana Solidaritatii	BRD-Groupe Societe Generale	Social	✓	✓	*	.	.	.	.	.	.
Euro2007 Habitat Build	BRD-Groupe Societe Generale	Social	*	*	*	.	.	.	.	.	.
Migrations 1 - "Ajutor pentru copiii si batranii ramasi acasa"	UniCredit Tiriac Bank	Social	*	*	✓	.	.	.	.	.	.
Campanie interna de promovare a prevederii 2%	Petrom	Social	✓	✓	*	.	.	.	.	.	.
Verde003	Coca-Cola HBC Romania	Environment	✓	*	*	.	.	.	.	.	.
Umbrela Verde 2009-De acum, orasul este mai verde!	Tuborg Romania	Environment	*	✓	✓	✓	.	.	.	✓	.
Finantele Mele 2008/2009	BCR	Education	*	*	✓	.	.	.	.	✓	.
Orange-Adept Work Camp, 2008	Orange Romania	Environment	✓	*	*	.	.	.	.	.	.
Clujul Are Suflet	Banca Transilvania	Social	*	*	✓	.	.	.	.	✓	.
Saptamana Solidaritatii, 2010	BRD-Groupe Societe Generale	Education	*	✓	*	.	.	.	.	.	.
Impreuna pentru fiecare, 2010	The Rompetrol Group	Social	*	*	✓	✓	.	.	.	.	.
START! Business 2009/2010	BCR	Education	*	✓	✓	.	.	.	.	.	.
"10 case intr-o saptamana!"	Vodafone Romania	Social	*	*	*	.	.	.	.	.	.
Olimpiada Verde	Transgaz	Environment	*	*	*	.	.	.	.	✓	✓
Parteneriat cu Habitat for Humanity - Cumpana	Western Union Romania	Social	*	*	*	.	.	.	.	.	.
Fiecare parc are povestea lui, 2010	Provident Finacial Romania	Environment	*	*	✓	.	.	.	.	.	✓
Impreună penmtru fiecare 2009	The Rompetrol Group	Social	✓	*	✓	✓	.	.	.	.	.
Raiffeisen Comunitati 2011	Raiffeisen Bank	Social	✓	*	*	✓	✓	.	✓	✓	.

From our sample of 24 CSR project we notice that most of them use web sites, internal platforms and emails, but rather a small percentage of Romanian business organizations use components of social media (like Facebook, Twiter, Youtube, Flickr) in their CSR project their potential being thus neglected in many cases.

In conclusion we think this study was useful to obtain an image of the corporate volunteering phenomenon in Romania. What we tried to demonstrate was that Romanian companies do not benefit enough from the potential of online approaches in their volunteering projects.

Online volunteering in Romania is in an incipient stage. People engaged in virtual volunteering have the possibility to undertake a variety of activities from locations remote to the organization or people they are assisting, via a computer or other Internet-connected device such as: translating documents; researching subjects; creating web pages; editing or writing proposals, press releases, newsletter articles, etc.; developing material for a curriculum; designing a database; designing graphics; providing legal, business, medical, agricultural or any other expertise; counseling people; tutoring or mentoring students; moderating online discussion groups; writing songs; creating a podcast; editing a video; monitoring the news; answering questions; tagging photos and files; managing other online volunteers. (<http://ict4empl.wikispaces.com/Definitions+of+Internet-mediated+Volunteering>).

## 5. FINAL CONCLUSIONS

From analyzing the opportunities and potentials treats regarding online volunteering we have formulated the following conclusions with practical implications for non-profit and for-profit organizations in Romania:

- We might need some additional legislation regarding the benefits for companies and employees that want to get involved in volunteering activities, like some fiscal benefits, with online volunteering being one of the most accessible forms, even for very busy employees;
- We need some kind of form of matching for online volunteering in Romania; it could be done through an NGO and/or with a web site in which the need to meet the offer of online volunteering; criteria as the area of interest or a certain geographical area could be criteria to be taken in consideration in the matching process; this matching option should be completed with a check for creditability for all parties evolved in the volunteering activity;
- There is a need for an increased advocacy and education for volunteering in general, and even more for online volunteering;
- There is a need for increased transparency and promotion of the activities and results of online volunteering, little data being transparently and easily available at the moment;
- It is important to have a constant preoccupation for the high quality of the online volunteering work from both the volunteer (who has a moral responsibility on providing a good quality work) and from the hosting organization (who has a responsibility of providing the conditions for a positive experience for the volunteer).

## REFERENCES

- Amichai-Hamburger, Y. (2007). Potential and promise of online volunteering. *Computers in Human Behaviour* 24 (2), 544 - 562.
- Bezmalinovic Dhebar B., & Stokes, B. (2008). A Nonprofit Manager's Guide to Online Volunteering. *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*, 18 (4), 497-506.
- Cravens, J. (2006). Involving International Online Volunteers: Factors for Success, Organizational Benefits, and New Views of Community. *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration*, 26 (1), 15 - 23.
- Ernest & Young (2013). *CSR trends and realities in Romania*, Edition 2013, available at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/145634894/CSRmedia-ro-Ernst-Young-CSR-Survey-2013-EN>, accessed in 30.08.2013
- Friedman M., (1970) *The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Profit*, New York Times, 13 September
- Gligor, D.C. (2011). *The Human Resources Dimension of Corporate Social Responsibility* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, West University of Timișoara, Timișoara, 2011)
- Kotler, P. & Lee, N. (2005). *Corporate Social Responsibility*, New Jersey: Ed. John Wiley and Sons

- Rheingold, H. (1993). *The virtual community: homesteading on the electronic frontier*. New York: Harper Perennial.
- Parliament of Romania, (2007), Law no. 195/2001 (updated in 2007) regarding the Romanian Volunteering, published in Romanian Official Monitor, part I, no. 276 from 25th of April, 2007.
- VOLUME, (2011), The National Agenda for volunteering in Romania 2012-2020, Federation of supporting the development of volunteering in Romania, available at [http://www.voluntariat.ro/download/Agenda\\_Publica\\_pt\\_Voluntariat\\_in\\_Romania\\_2012\\_2020.pdf](http://www.voluntariat.ro/download/Agenda_Publica_pt_Voluntariat_in_Romania_2012_2020.pdf), accessed in 2.08.2013
- [www.responsabilitatesociala.ro](http://www.responsabilitatesociala.ro)
- [ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/indexen.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/indexen.htm)
- [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/index_en.htm)
- <http://www.e-volunteerism.com/quarterly/09oct/09oct-daniels>
- <http://www.Volunteeringnz.org.nz/businessandcorporate>
- <http://www.volunteermatch.org/corporations/resources/businesscase.jsp>
- [www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org)