



# Upskilling Volunteer Managers in Sport | UVMIS

## Guide to Sports Volunteering, Solidarity and European Values



“Upskilling volunteer managers in sport” (UVMIS) project aims to set a new standard, and to lay the foundation for transforming the offering of sports volunteer management qualification in Europe, by creating a full Higher Education level curriculum, detailing what and how professionals need to learn, to tackle contemporary and future critical challenges.

The Project is led by Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University in collaboration with partners including Centre for European Volunteering, Dutch Hockey Association, ENGSO, NR Sports Volunteering Solutions, IGNITX, French Federation Sport and Leisure Profession, CSV Trentino, and Vytautas Magnus University.

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## Introduction to UVMIS and this Guide

This guide has been developed as part of the “**Upskilling Volunteer Managers in Sport**” (UVMIS) Erasmus+ project. It belongs to a series of four complementary guides developed to support sports volunteer managers across Europe:

- 1 - European Code of Ethics for Sports Volunteer Managers
- 2 - Guide to Sport Volunteering, Solidarity and European Values
- 3 - Guide on the Role of Sports Volunteer Managers in Facilitating Inclusive Sports Volunteering to Facilitate Culturally Sensitive and Inclusive Sport Engagement
- 4 - Guide on Volunteering in Sports Events.

At the core of UVMIS lies the idea that addressing the sports volunteer management issues of tomorrow requires a better trained, qualified and recognised volunteer manager. A professional that can think and act strategically and is equipped with the latest skills and scientific concepts to organise effectively. Through the state-of-the-art report, it was found that there is an overall lack of resources throughout Europe for training sport volunteer managers to this level.

UVMIS contributes to closing the gap between European countries and addressing the overall need by creating new training opportunities and resources which raise the capacity of sports organisations and communities to offer competitive and noncompetitive sports. The main results, consisting of higher education curriculum aimed at experienced sports volunteer managers and four practical guides on ethical codes, EU values in volunteering, inclusive volunteering and event volunteering addresses the needs of volunteer managers and sports organisations in acquiring the necessary skills and insights and sets a high standard for future resources and qualifications for sport volunteer managers. Through the state-of-the-art report and policy brief (forthcoming in 2026), it is shown the need in Europe and provides recommendations for decision makers to improve policies around sports volunteer management training and qualifications.

Read more about UVMIS and find project results [here](#).

The guides take into consideration two distinct approaches to volunteer management (Meijs, Hoogstad, 2001):

- **Membership Management (MM)** describes organisations like local sports clubs where volunteers are a cohesive, existing group with a strong, shared culture. Expectations are often implicit, recognition is based on long-term service, and volunteers often dedicate many hours.
- **Programme Management (PM)** is used for specific, time-limited projects, such as large or smaller scale sporting events. This model involves recruiting volunteers for defined roles, tasks and responsibilities.

This **Guide to Sport Volunteering, Solidarity and European Values** explores European values in relation to volunteer management in sport. The introduction provides an explanation of the European values and a framework for volunteer management in the sports sector. In the subsequent sections, each European value is examined in terms of how it manifests within volunteer management in sport, along with the associated threats and opportunities.

The values of the European Union (EU), as outlined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU, 2012), define the EU's identity as a shared legal order. Adherence to these values is a prerequisite for joining the EU, and member states are required to uphold them even after accession. Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (2012) lists **six core EU values, which also form the core of this guide:**

**Respect for human dignity**

**Freedom**

**Democracy**

**Equality**

**The rule of law**

**Respect for human rights**

As described in the **Guide to Volunteering, Solidarity and European Values (EVI-DEMS, 2023)**, solidarity plays a key role in volunteer activities. People volunteer for a sports club or event when there is a sense of unity and a shared goal. There is a common interest in or feeling of connection to the club or event for which someone volunteers, without a monetary return.

Just like a sports club, the EU is also founded on the principle of solidarity where a collective goal is pursued. Volunteers contribute to this greater purpose without direct personal financial gain. In doing so, European values serve as guiding principles and help foster solidarity within the EU.

The UVMIS project explores how the quality of volunteer management in sports organisations can be improved and expanded (UVMIS, 2024). This is not only important for volunteer managers themselves, but also for others within the system surrounding them. These include board members, policymakers at both local and national levels and commercial (event) organisations. These stakeholders are in direct or indirect contact with volunteer managers and have a significant influence on the functioning of both the managers and the volunteers. They can empower volunteer managers to act in accordance with European values.

This guide addresses European values in combination with volunteer management. In a time of societal changes that affect the quality of the volunteer environment (Enjolras, 2021) these values offer a framework for protecting volunteers. The EU requires adherence to European values to safeguard its citizens. This protection must also extend to those engaged in volunteer work, shielding

them from arbitrariness, discrimination, and social exclusion, while promoting and striving for these values. Moreover, strong volunteer management can help seize the opportunities these values present and strengthen cohesion within an organisation.

This guide is aimed at volunteer managers who are currently active or have previously been active in the sports sector. It is part of the learning materials and training developed during the UVMIS project. These resources enable experienced volunteer managers in the sports sector to further develop their skills and obtain (formal) qualifications for competencies acquired through formal, non-formal, and informal means.

Each chapter begins with the definition of the European value at its core. Then, for each value, it is described how it plays a role within sports clubs and mega events. This includes not only how these values are expressed, but also what threats they may face. In this way, it becomes clear how volunteer managers can safeguard and promote each EU value.

This guide outlines various opportunities and challenges that volunteer managers may encounter based on European values. The guide [\*\*European Code of Ethics for Sports Volunteer Managers\*\*](#) delves deeper into ethical dilemmas related to these opportunities and threats and offers practical tools for addressing them.

## Human Dignity and Human Rights

This chapter explains two European values: **respect for human dignity** and **respect for human rights**. These values are closely intertwined and serve as foundational principles for the other European values. For this reason, they are addressed together in a single chapter. No distinction is made between **member management** and **programme management**; both contexts are included in the examples without being explicitly named. Precisely because these values are so fundamental, the distinction between different contexts is less relevant.

### What is meant by these European values?

**Respect for human dignity** is central to the system of **fundamental rights** (TEU, 2012). It is both an independent fundamental right and the basis for all other rights. No fundamental right may violate the human dignity of others. This means that one person's rights must not come at the expense of another person's dignity.

The preamble of the EU Treaty states that the signatory parties attach great importance to the value of respect for human rights. **Article 6(1) of the EU Treaty** (European Union, 1992) affirms that the EU recognises the rights, freedoms and principles set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2007).

The **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU** (2007) guarantees the protection of human rights. These rights include, among others, the right to non-discrimination based on gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation; the right to the protection of personal data; and the right of access to justice. The rights of minorities, including cultural, religious, and linguistic minorities, are also covered.

### **What are the threats to those values?**

A threat to the value of human dignity arises when the exercise of one person's fundamental rights negatively impacts the **dignity** of another. This can certainly occur within the volunteer environment in sport: for example, a volunteer expressing themselves (in a hurtful way) based on the value of freedom, towards another volunteer who may have a different religion or sexual orientation. Another example in sports of direct violation is when spectators or athletes express themselves in a harmful way towards a voluntary referee during a match. This can even happen indirectly, through a misplaced comment or expression. In such cases, **the human dignity of the second volunteer is compromised**.

This example also undermines the respect for human rights: **the right to non-discrimination based on religion and sexual orientation** is violated. It illustrates how these two European values are closely connected and influence one another. A third European value that aligns with this is freedom, see chapter 3 for a further explanation of this value.

### **How can a volunteer manager promote these values?**

It is the **responsibility of a volunteer manager** to create an environment in which the example described above cannot occur and to act if it does. The volunteer manager can play a significant role in promoting these values by, for instance, introducing a **code of conduct** developed in collaboration with the volunteers and ensuring it is upheld. The European values of democracy and the rule of law align closely with this approach. The volunteer manager can also reinforce desired behaviour by recognising volunteers who set a positive example, thereby establishing a norm for acceptable conduct.

By drafting a code of conduct, both the volunteer manager and the volunteers are implicitly encouraged to reflect on the values of **human dignity** and **respect for human rights**, as these values are embedded in the rules themselves. In this way, a volunteer manager can actively promote these values within the context of sports volunteering. The **size** of the volunteer group, their **interpersonal relationships**, and the **duration** of the volunteer engagement all influence the manager's role: with a large group of volunteers who barely know each other and only work together for a single day, the investment in **building mutual understanding** and a **safe environment** will differ from that required for a small group of volunteers who already know each other from other contexts and collaborate over an entire season.

## Freedom

The third European value discussed is the value of **freedom**. This value is rooted in Europe's **cultural, religious, and humanistic traditions**. In the **EU Treaty (2007)**, member states reaffirm their commitment to the principle of freedom. This guide focuses on **individual freedoms** such as **respect for private life, freedom of religion, and freedom of expression**. This is not an exhaustive list of freedoms; these particular freedoms were chosen because they may come under pressure or be strengthened within the **sports volunteer landscape**.

## Clubs - Member management

### What threats exist for this value?

In volunteer contexts characterised by **member management**, relationships between the **volunteer manager and volunteers** tend to be more diffuse (Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001). These are often informal relationships, with volunteers knowing each other well and the **social aspect** serving as a key motivator. As a result, the boundary between being someone's supervisor and being their acquaintance can blur, potentially compromising the **right to privacy**. Volunteers have the **right to a private life**, including the **freedom to choose** when they engage in volunteering. If a volunteer manager has access to a volunteer's **personal schedule**, this knowledge can be misused, putting pressure on the volunteer to step in when help is urgently needed.

The close-knit nature of member management organisations can also pose a threat to **freedom of expression**. In a **homogeneous group**, holding a dissenting opinion can be difficult and even more challenging to voice.

Traditionally, clubs are founded on **shared principles** that bring people together. According to Boessenkool (2011), this often results in a **uniform pattern of values and norms**. For example, some clubs are historically based on a specific **religious tradition**. However, the **freedom to associate** based on religion also carries a risk: is it acceptable to **exclude** individuals who adhere to a different faith? And by questioning this, it can be concluded it can be considered a threat to the value of **freedom**.

### How can a volunteer manager promote this value?

Within a **member management** context, a volunteer manager can promote the European value of **freedom** in several ways. **Respect for private life** can be supported by clearly defining **roles and responsibilities**. This clarity helps set expectations and reduces the likelihood of intrusions into personal life.

By giving (potential) volunteers **freedom to make their own schedule** or to decide **what tasks they want to do**, you as an organisation can become more appealing to volunteer for. The **flexibility** you provide might help retain and acquire volunteers and make **long-term commitments** according to Arnon, Almog-Bar and Cnaan (2022).

In addition to clear role descriptions, the volunteer manager can ensure that **organisational policies** are developed and implemented to safeguard volunteers' freedoms. Such policies might include protections for **religious freedom** ensuring that volunteers are not excluded based on their faith or forced to perform tasks that conflict with their beliefs. Policies can also address **flexibility in volunteer commitment**, allowing volunteers a degree of autonomy within the framework established by the manager.

**Freedom of expression** can also be encouraged by the volunteer manager, who can foster an environment where everyone's **opinions** are heard. This can be achieved by giving volunteers **dedicated time to speak** during meetings.

## Events - Programme management

### What threats exist to this value?

At large events, there are often many volunteers. On the one hand, this makes it more challenging to offer **tailored support** to individual volunteers; on the other hand, it also means there is more **capacity** available to address various needs. Take, for example, the issue of a **prayer room**: when should this option be offered to volunteers? How should a volunteer manager respond to volunteers who request time and space to practice their faith? In such cases, the volunteer manager must be mindful of the value of **freedom** for one volunteer, while also not losing sight of the value of **equality** for others.

At larger events, where there is less **homogeneity** among volunteers, it is likely that volunteers come from diverse backgrounds. For instance, a volunteer may express a preference for a particular **athlete** or **team**. While expressing such preferences is allowed, it is important that **encouragement** does not turn into **discouragement** of another sport or country.

### How can a volunteer manager promote this value?

In contexts where **programme management** is the guiding principle, there tends to be greater **distance** between the volunteer manager and the volunteers. This makes it easier to separate **private life** from **volunteer work**. This separation can be supported by allowing volunteers sufficient **time and space** to withdraw when needed. Additionally, it is important not to **monitor volunteers' social media accounts** unless there is a direct reason to do so. It is advisable to formalise such agreements in the **organisation's policies**.

**Freedom of expression** can be promoted by giving volunteers the opportunity to share their input. This can be facilitated through **team-building activities** prior to the event, allowing volunteers to get to know each other and the organisation, and helping them feel more comfortable and confident in expressing themselves.

When **tailored support** is possible, the volunteer manager can respond to **individual values**. For example, if a volunteer indicates that they do not wish to engage in **physical contact** due to religious beliefs, the manager can ensure that this person is not assigned to a role that involves checking

wristbands or other **physical interactions** with athletes or visitors. With a large number of volunteers and tasks, it becomes feasible to find the **perfect fit**.

In a **programme management** context, the **freedom of assembly** is less prominent than in member management contexts (Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001). Volunteers in this setting sign up with **clear expectations**, as the purpose is predefined. As a result, volunteer roles are **well-defined**, and the need for meetings is lower.

## Democracy

The fourth European value is **democracy**. This value is described in multiple **EU treaties**. For example, the **EU Treaty (2007)** states that member states commit themselves to the principle of democracy. This principle means that the **governance** of a country, for instance, must be based on the **will of the people**. In the context of **sports volunteering** several forms of democracy are reflected, particularly within **member management** structures:

**Representative Democracy**: In the sports volunteering context, this refers to a form of democracy in which members of a sports club, for example, do not make all administrative decisions themselves but delegate this responsibility to elected representatives. These representatives form the club's board and make decisions on club policy on behalf of the members.

**Transparency in Decision-Making**: The process by which decisions are made must be **open** and **transparent**. Within a club context, the decision-making process should be **visible** and **accountable** to members and stakeholders. This means that **information must be accessible**, decision-making processes **transparent**, **opportunities for input** must be available, and **accountability and oversight** must be ensured. These elements of transparency come together during a **General Assembly (GA)** of the club, where volunteers are also part of the organisation and contribute to the implementation of club policy.

**Right to Complaint and Petition**: The **right to complaint** refers to the ability to file a complaint regarding the conduct of a governing body toward individuals. This right aims to provide **legal protection** and promote **quality improvement**. The right to complaint falls under the broader **right to petition**: the right to submit a written request (such as a complaint) to the competent authority. Within a club structure, depending on the **statutes and regulations**, it is possible to file a complaint or to hold the board accountable during a General Assembly.

It can be said that organisations who are able to engage their volunteers in a **meaningful way** are using the **full capacity** of the volunteers: those volunteers are more likely to keep being involved. To maximise this **"engageability"** of an organisation, the management has to be aware of four clusters

(Arnon et al., 2022): **value-based (ideological)** cluster, managerial **cluster**, **physical cluster** and **supportive-connection cluster**. The value of **democracy** can be found in every cluster, but mainly in the **value-based cluster (decision making)**.

## Clubs - Member management

### What threats exist to this value?

The sports club is, by its nature, a **democratic organisation**. Precisely for this reason, democracy within a sports club can come under pressure from various threats. A **lack of transparency and participation**, for example, can lead to decision-making taking place **behind closed doors**, members having little influence on club policy, and **poor communication** regarding important matters such as **finances** or **board decisions**. As a result, power may become concentrated in the hands of a small group, with little **accountability**. This can create an environment within the club structure where **members and volunteers** feel unable to express their **opinions**, and **criticism** of the board is discouraged.

A **lack of knowledge and education** about **democratic processes** within the club also poses a threat to this value. It means that members and volunteers are insufficiently aware of their **rights and responsibilities** within the organisation, and of the **role they can play** in shaping it.

### How can a volunteer manager promote this value?

To strengthen the democratic value within a sports club, it is essential to establish clear **statutes and regulations** that guarantee members' **right to participate** and **vote**. **Member meetings** that allow individuals to express their **views** and engage in **dialogue** ensure that members can actively take part in the **decision-making process**. **Transparent communication** regarding policies, finances, and decisions builds trust among members and helps prevent misunderstandings. Finally, **informing members and volunteers** about **democratic values** contributes to greater awareness of their **rights and responsibilities** within the organisation.

## Events - Programme management

### What threats exist to this value?

In the context of **programme management**, specific **goals** are often pursued. Volunteers typically have little to no **say** in these goals; in fact, they often commit to a particular organisation precisely because of them. These goals are the main reason most volunteers choose to participate in such events. As a result, volunteers have **limited direct influence** over the objectives being pursued. However, the value of democracy can be compromised when there is a **lack of transparency** in decision-making that affects the goals volunteers are contributing to, whether in striving for or achieving them.

Take, for example, someone who signs up as a volunteer for a sports event in a particular city, only to find out after registration that the event has been **moved to a city** on the other side of the country. The **organisational structure** within which volunteers operate - especially in large-scale sports events - is often not designed in a way that allows volunteers to **make their voices heard** through meetings

or other forms of participation in decision-making, should they wish to do so. Nevertheless, volunteers can claim a certain degree of **influence** by **organising themselves** and taking a stand towards the organisation.

### How can a volunteer manager promote this value?

In sport, it is common practice for many organisations to have a **members' council** or an **athletes' commission**. Such a body ensures that the individuals who **drive** or **represent** the organisation have a voice in decision-making. This can be compared to a **works council** in a corporate setting. In this way, the value of **democracy** is safeguarded. A volunteer manager operating within a programme management context can, depending on the **duration** of the volunteer engagement or the event, give volunteers a **voice** and involve them in the **decision-making process** by establishing such a body.

Another way to promote this European value as a volunteer manager is by embedding a complaints procedure within the volunteer structure. A formal **complaints procedure** defines the **process for submitting a grievance** and thereby also contributes to the European value of **the rule of law**. By providing these mechanisms, **the voice of the volunteer** is heard. This is part of maximising the **engageability** of the organisation and might therefore also help in retaining volunteers (Arnon et al., 2022)

## Equality

The value of **equality** states that everyone is **equal before the law**, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, age, or sexual orientation. All forms of **discrimination** are prohibited. Discrimination is defined as the **unequal treatment**, disadvantage, or exclusion of individuals based on personal characteristics without a justifiable reason (Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, n.d.).

## Clubs - Member management

### What threats exist to this value?

**Discrimination is institutionalised.** According to the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights (n.d.), this is not necessarily due to **discriminatory laws** or regulations, but rather to conscious and unconscious **stereotypes and prejudices**. These manifest in the **structural and collective marginalisation** of groups based on their (perceived) ethnicity.

Just as in broader society, individuals in the sports volunteer context must be aware of this in order to prevent discriminatory behaviour. This awareness begins with the **selection of volunteers**: does everyone have an **equal opportunity**? Throughout the **volunteer journey**, this issue persists. Are all volunteers **evaluated** in the same way? Do they all have **equal opportunities** for advancement? Raising awareness within the organisation can help ensure that **exclusion** does not prevent full utilisation of the volunteer potential.

In member management contexts, such as sports clubs, members and volunteers often know each other well. This can lead to **dominant groups** becoming so close-knit that it becomes difficult for **minorities** to integrate. As a result, minorities may be **excluded** from positions they would otherwise be interested in or qualified for.

Sports clubs tend to be **homogeneous organisations** (Boessenkool, 2011; Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001). This often happens informally, but in some cases, the membership is explicitly homogeneous. Examples include student sports clubs or LGBTQ+ sports clubs. This creates an **inclusion paradox**: by including a specific group, other groups may be excluded.

### How can a volunteer manager promote this value?

As a volunteer manager, it is important to have a clear understanding of all members within your organisation and to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate based on their **abilities and skills**. A prevailing belief, for example, is that **people with disabilities** are less competent (Rutland et al., 2022). This perception is likely to exist within the context of a sports club and therefore also among volunteer managers. Athletes with disabilities may be included in the club, which reflects diversity. However, these individuals are often **not invited to participate** in the organisation itself. This is not inclusion, but **exclusion**.

Another way to promote this value as a volunteer manager is to implement an **active diversity policy**. This means that when qualifications are equal, preference is given to the (potential) volunteer who contributes to a more **diverse team composition**. Another option is to use **blind recruitment**, where personal data is initially hidden from the selection committee.

## Events - Programme management

### What threats exist to this value?

In programme management, **formal recruitment procedures** are more common than in member management. Selection inherently involves **exclusion**. It is crucial that **selection committees** are aware of their (power) position. The decisions they make must be justifiable on the basis of **fairness**.

Even after volunteers have been recruited, their **equality** can still be threatened. This may occur when certain volunteers are **favoured** based on personal preference rather than performance. Such favouritism can influence the **tasks assigned** to them and the way they are **evaluated**.

### How can a volunteer manager promote this value?

A volunteer manager can promote the value of **equality** by establishing **clear processes and procedures**. For example, **recruitment and evaluation criteria** can be made public, along with explanations for the decisions made. A **diverse selection committee** can also contribute to **equal opportunities**. Additionally, applying the **four-eyes principle**—ensuring decisions are reviewed by at

least two people from different backgrounds—can reduce the risk of inequality. These principles apply not only to the selection process but also to the **evaluation process**.

## Rule of law

Respect for **the rule of law** is the sixth European value discussed in this guide. This principle requires EU member states to implement systems that guarantee citizens' **right to protection**. Within the European Union, actions are based on the **rule of law**: all decisions are grounded in treaties that have been voluntarily and democratically ratified by member states. **Law enforcement** and justice fall under the responsibility of an **independent judiciary**. The law is **binding for everyone**, including government institutions, and judicial independence is a prerequisite. In this way, **legal certainty, equality before the law, legality, and adequate protection** are ensured.

Within the context of sport the concept of **fair play** is widely known. Not only athletes, referees and judges but also volunteers and volunteer managers embrace this concept. Playing by the rules of the sport and promoting **sportsmanship**.

## Clubs - Member management

### What threats exist to this value?

In member management contexts, several threats may arise when fundamental principles of the **rule of law** are not upheld. For example, the principle of **legality** may be compromised if rules such as **statutes, internal regulations, or disciplinary codes** are unclear or not communicated in advance, leaving members unaware of what is permitted or prohibited. The principle of **equality** is threatened when members are treated unequally based on **background, gender, or age** resulting in **exclusion** from training, competitions, or voting rights. This also puts other European values at risk, such as **freedom, equality and respect for human rights**.

The **right to legal protection** is also crucial: without a **complaints committee or appeals procedure**, members cannot defend themselves against board decisions or disciplinary actions. This legal protection aligns with the value of **democracy**, where the **right to file complaints** is also recognised. Finally, the principle of **democracy** is undermined when members have **no say** in policy, when the board is not **transparently elected**, or when important decisions are not made through the **general assembly**. This principle is further elaborated in chapter 4, which focuses on the European value of democracy.

### How can a volunteer manager promote this value?

By making **statutes, regulations, codes of conduct, and disciplinary rules** publicly available via the website or a member portal, **arbitrariness** is prevented and members and volunteers know where

they stand. To ensure that people are truly aware of these documents and understand them, it is important for the volunteer manager to **address them at the start of a new season** during the first meeting. Additionally, involving members through regular **general meetings, surveys, and themed gatherings** helps keep them engaged and ensures they feel heard.

Establishing an **independent complaints or disputes committee**, separate from the board, contributes to **objective decision-making** and strengthens **trust** within the member management context. It is also essential to inform members and volunteers about their **rights**, for example through a meeting or an (online) workshop. **Transparent communication** about decisions and policies helps prevent misunderstandings and increases support.

## Events - Programme management

### What threats exist to this value?

Within the programme management context, the value of the *rule of law* can be undermined by various threats. Corruption and conflicts of interest directly compromise fairness and transparency, while discrimination and unequal treatment erode the principle of equal rights and thereby the rule of law itself. Failure to comply with laws and regulations—such as labour laws or privacy legislation—can diminish trust in the organisation. A lack of transparency in decision-making and oversight mechanisms, such as the absence of a whistleblower policy, increases the risk of misconduct within the organisation.

### How can a volunteer manager promote this value?

As a volunteer manager in a programme management context, you can promote this European value by fostering a culture of **integrity, transparency, and accountability**. This starts with **setting a good example**: consistently acting in accordance with **regulations, laws, and ethical standards**. It is also important to establish and communicate **clear procedures and guidelines** so that volunteers understand what is expected of them and what they can expect in return.

Creating a **safe environment** where volunteers can **report misconduct** without fear of consequences is essential—think of appointing a **confidential advisor** or implementing a **whistleblower policy**. Encouraging **open dialogue**, taking concerns seriously, and actively involving volunteers in **decision-making** all contribute to an environment where the **rule of law** is respected. Additionally, organising regular sessions on **integrity, rights, and responsibilities**—or highlighting these topics in other ways—helps raise awareness and increases the likelihood of **compliance**.

## Conclusions

It has been shown that the **six European values** are closely interconnected. When the value of **democracy** is promoted, it also impacts other values such as **freedom**, specifically the **freedom of expression**. Democracy likewise influences the **rule of law**: democratic systems are characterised by **transparent decision-making** and the **right to file complaints and petitions**, both of which are also key components of the rule of law. A **volunteer manager** who aims to uphold and promote the six European values must therefore treat them as a **unified whole** rather than as separate elements. This ensures an **integrated approach** from both the volunteer manager and the **organisation** they operate within.

Implementing the European values within the **volunteer environment** has a positive effect on **solidarity**: it strengthens the **sense of unity**, which in turn enhances the **feeling of connection** and the **motivation of volunteers** to contribute.

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