



**County Mayo
Volunteer Centre
Annual Report 2018**

**Submitted to the Department
Rural and Community
Development
March 2019**

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1. Introduction

This report highlights the achievements of County Mayo Volunteer Centre in 2018. We offer support to individuals and Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) to reach their individual and collective goals while making a significant contribution to their local community and society.

2. Highlights and Achievements

2.1 Did you know that in 2018?



We supported

275

Volunteers

From

28

Countries

Who
contributed

13,475

Hours

+

427

- Engagements with VIOs

506

- Garda Vetting forms processed

- Volunteers referred to VIOs

Delivering training on topics such as Volunteer Leadership, Management Training and Garda Vetting to a broad range of voluntary organisations

110 attendees

Jackie Clarke Collection
Brickens Housing Association
Ballina Chamber of Commerce
Mayo University Hospital
Mayo Addiction and suicide awareness
Charlestown Arts Centre
Knockmore Rathduff Dev Company

Ballina Salmon Festival
Hospice Shop
Le Cheile Family Resource Centre
Mayo Parkinsons
Cheshire Ireland
Clar IRD
Enable Ireland

2.2.1 Volunteer Leadership Training

"Very useful, made me think about ways we can improve experiences for volunteers."

"Really well presented, enjoyed it emmensly."

92%

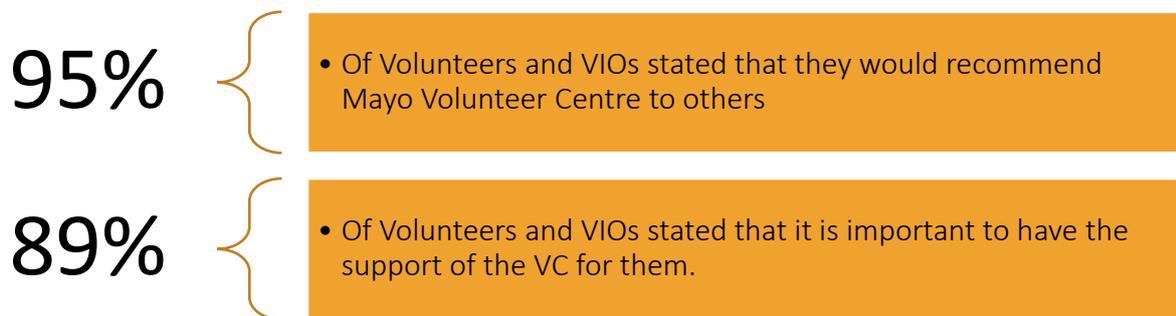
Satisfaction

"Great course and the trainers made it so informative and enjoyable"

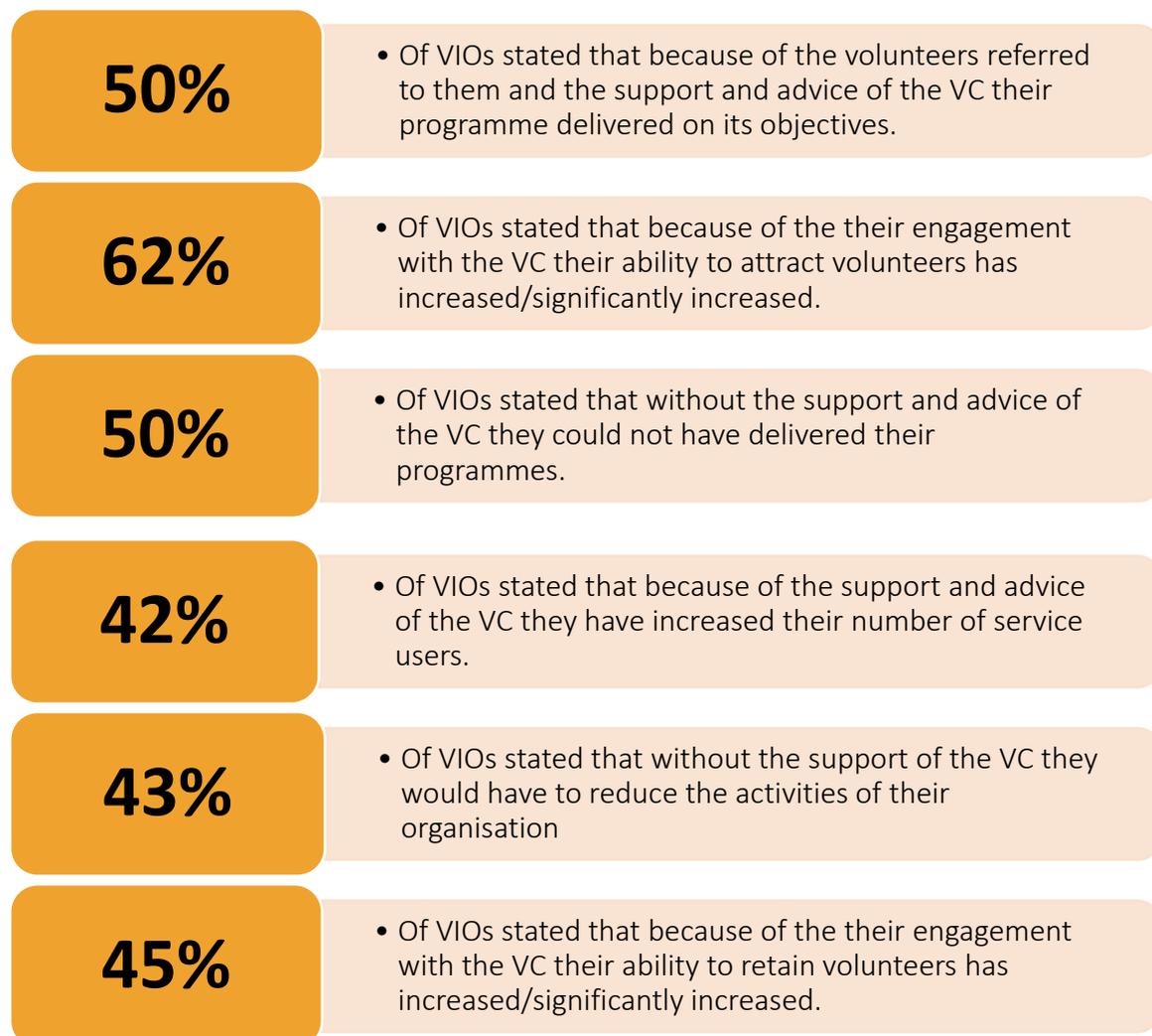
"Learned so much from trainers and other organisations".

2.2 Our Impact

According to our volunteers and VIOs our work has a significant impact on them and for the community and is very important that they have the support we offer.



2.2.1 Our Impact on VIOs



Source: VIO Survey

2.2.2 Our Impact on Volunteers.

60%

- Reported an increase in their mental health and wellbeing as a result of volunteering.

61%

- Reported an that they had increased their range of friendships.

66%

- Reported an increase in their self-esteem .

81%

- Reported an increased feeling that they were making a useful contribution to their community.

64%

- Reported an increase in their interpersonal skills e.g. communication, working with others etc.

Source: Volunteer Survey

2.3 Volunteer Stories

69% of Volunteers reported increased confidence in their own abilities following volunteering.



Nicki McLaughlan

Nicki has been volunteering for 23 years as volunteer coordinator with Friends of Ballina District Hospital. The service was set up to provide visitation to those who may not be fortunate enough to have visitors from week to week. Nicki is a humbe man who doesnt like the limelight and only wants to thank all the volunteers who assist him in this wonderful service bu without Nicki there would be a lot more loneliness in Ballina and the surrounding areas.

67% Reported an increased sense of belonging to their community..



Michael McGloin

Michael has been volunteering with Mayo North Promotions for over a year. He was attracted to this volunteer role as he had completed a Business course in GMIT. He has an interest in writing articles, using CRM, Google Analytics, SEO, word press etc. He feels that his volunteering has given him valuable experience which he hopes will enhance his future career. He says ' It is an exhilarating experience to be given something back to the community without financial reward and it is also good to be in a position to be able to interact with the community at this level, without the constraints of time and money.'

2.4 Priority Areas

Mayo Volunteer Centre recognises that there is a range of social issues which can be partially addressed by our work in conjunction with other state and non-state agencies. We that in mind we engaged and worked with a range of organisation in areas we saw as priorities in 2018.

Mental Health

Mayo Recovery College - Once a year we co-deliver a peer-recovery workshop to people overcoming mental ill-health.

Advertise volunteering opportunities for local groups working in the area of mental health such as - Ballina Recovery Centre, Mayo Mental Health Association.

Work in partnership with social workers and support workers assisting people with Mental ill-health such as Mayo Centre of Independent living, Employability Mayo, HSE, etc.

Providing our garda vetting service to mental health organisations to assist them to protect the welfare of clients.

Unemployment

Worked in partnership with Mayo Jobs Club to deliver volunteering workshop at every local Jobs Club meeting in 15 different locations in Co.Mayo

Hosted outreach information stands at three Intreo Offices in Co.Mayo on a number of occasions

Developed a Social Media video featuring various local employers outlining the benefits of volunteering when job seeking.

Participated in GMIT Graduation Fair 2018- Helping college leavers gain valuable work experience through volunteering

Inward Migration

Member of the Steering Committee of Mayo Intercultural Action and Diversity Mayo.

Hosted outreach information stands to residents in the Direct Provision Centre based in Ballyhaunis

Assisted South West Mayo Development company set up and run a Volunteer Befriending programme to support the Syrian Refugee Resettlement programme

2.5 Highlights from 2018

2.5.1 Celebrated our 10 year anniversary

A special night of celebration took place in Áras Inis Gluaire, Belmullet on Thursday, October 18 to celebrate a decade of volunteering in the county. Key note speakers on the night were 2018 Mayo Person of the Year Sr. Maureen Lally and former Governor of Mountjoy Prison, John Lonergan to emphasise the importance of connecting and embracing community. Over 80 people attended on the night with many local organisations taking the opportunity to showcase themselves in a mini-expo.

An Erris-based documentary, 'A place to Gather' was shown, capturing the views of older people living in the Erris area. Initiated by Comharchumann Forbartha Cill tSeadhna Teo in Geesala, this project examined the services available within the community, and explored fears that exist for people around loneliness, isolation, immigration and technology. The film contrasted the sadness caused by from migration and local economic difficulties to the joy that comes with living in such a beautiful part of the country. It was noted that often with new technology, people forget to connect with each other, something that is essential for mental wellbeing and personal development. Communities thrive when people get involved, particularly in a voluntary capacity.

Councillor Gerry Coyle paid tribute to those involved, stating: It is safe to say that anyone who sat in the audience and listened to the past Governor of Mountjoy Prison, John Lonergan and the wonderful Sister Maureen Lally, had to leave this event inspired and uplifted. They both spoke so eloquently as did the other presenters. It is fantastic to have the Mayo Volunteer Centre in Erris for the last ten years and I wishing them continued success and growth. I wonder how many of us could give up a few hours of our week and volunteer with a local organisation."



3.1 Scope

We offer support and guidance to volunteers and VIOs across County Mayo.



We offer the following services to:

1. Volunteers

- The opportunity to meet with a member of staff to discuss volunteering opportunities.
- Access to a database of volunteering opportunities so that the volunteer can choose the opportunity that best suits them.
- Information on the how, why and where of volunteering, the volunteers rights and obligations and best practice in volunteering.
- On-going support for the volunteer through regular contact.

2. Volunteer Involving Organisations

- We offer a free volunteer placement and referral service.
- Email and telephone support with our staff on the how, why and where of volunteering.
- Support, advice and information on policy issues.
- Training on involving and managing volunteers.
- Help with developing new projects involving volunteers.
- Advice and information around best practice issues when involving volunteers
- Garda Vetting Service.

- We also act as the lead organisation in County Wicklow for National Volunteering Week which gives everyone the opportunity to volunteer on a range of projects across the county.
- In conjunction with other organisations we organise volunteering and community exhibitions across the county.

3.3 Staffing

There are 4 staff (Manager full time, Leah placement officer, full time, Edel works two days a week in Ballina and Frances is on a CE scheme and works Wednesday, Thursday and Friday) who ensure that the whole county receives the services offered by Mayo Volunteer Centre. Our office main office is in Ballina on Cathedral Road and we have an outreach office in Castlebar both open five days a week.

3.4 Area Profile – Demographics, Population Density

Mayo County is the third largest county in the state and measures 5585 km² in area. It borders counties Sligo, Galway and Roscommon. Mayo Volunteer Centre serves the county-wide area, with a population of 130,425, consisting of 64,879 males and 65,546 females (Census 2016).

The principal towns and their (urban only) populations are (Mayo LECP 2014):

Major Towns	Population
Castlebar	6,049
Westport	5,453
Ballina	4,021
Claremorris	3,987
Ballinrobe	3,678
Ballyhaunis	2,987

Education:

Of those aged 15 years and over whose full-time education had ceased, 21.3 per cent were educated to at most primary level only; a further 54.7 per cent attained second level while 24.0 per cent were educated to third level.

Deprivation

According to the 2011 Pobal HP Deprivation Index, Co Mayo is the most deprived local authority area within the West Region. The county also has an older population than the national average, and has a class composition well below the national average. These factors result in us dealing with a high proportion of volunteers with extra support needs, who request our service on a face-to-face basis.

Transport links:

The peripherality of Mayo County, in national and international terms, is exacerbated by major infrastructural deficiencies, particularly in relation to strategic road and rail connections, telecommunications and energy. These infrastructural deficiencies are a major inhibiting factor in terms of the social and economic development of the County and quality of life in general. Areas of County Mayo can take up to 1 ½ hrs. travel time in a car to get to either the Castlebar or Ballina offices. Public transport is limited or not available. Considerable inroads by the Volunteer Centre have been made since 2010 in supporting the peripheral towns by way of an annual outreach development strategy.

Internet:

55.0 per cent of households had broadband connectivity compared with 63.8 per cent nationally (census 2011). This is particularly significant regarding accessibility to online volunteer applications and a considerable factor the Volunteer Centre into considers when planning its outreach programme, ensuring regular wide geographical coverage.

Languages:

56,935 persons could speak the Irish language and of these 19,087 spoke the language daily. 9,838 persons spoke a language other than Irish or English at home and of these 2,239 could not speak English well or at all. Polish was the most common foreign language spoken at home with 2,837 speakers.

References:

Census 2016, 2011

Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020

Mayo Local Economic and Community Plan 2014

3.5 Area Strengths

Volunteering:

Despite the challenging socio-economic factors, volunteering in Mayo, as reported in the 2006 Census results showed that 17,977 people across Mayo County were involved in one or more voluntary activity. This means that 14.5 % of Mayo's adult population (people aged over 15 years) were volunteering in the County of Mayo. Helping or voluntary work with a social or charitable organisation was the highest uptake of volunteering at 36%.

3.6 Area Challenges

1. The population density for County Mayo of 23.4 people per sq km remains far below the national average of 67, thus indicating a relatively high level of population dispersal in the County. The county also has double the national average of vacant dwellings at 24%.
2. 71% (92,752) of all people living in County Mayo live rurally (census 2011). This suggests a likelihood of social issues related to rural isolation, and also impacts on the ability of isolated people to become involved in formal voluntary activity based within the urban centres. This is exacerbated by the poor public transport within the county, especially in rural areas.
3. The CSO3 reports that 'Co. Mayo has a comparatively more elderly population with no significant decrease in the population between the ages of 30 and 65, after which there is a steep decline up to age 75. Unlike the State overall, where the low point in the total population is mirrored by births 17 years previously, for Co. Mayo the low point is age 21 reflecting the rural nature of the county as young people move away to work and study'. 'Other counties to show a broadly similar structure are the predominantly rural counties of Donegal and Kerry'. The CSO Census of Population

2011 classifies males and females by single year of age up to 18 years (19+ = 19 years of age and over).

4. In 2011 55.0 percent of households in Co. Mayo had broadband connectivity compared with 63.8 percent nationally.
5. 24% of persons in Mayo had a third level qualification – this compares poorly with the national figure of 31%

