



**County Mayo
Volunteer Centre
Annual Report 2019**

**Submitted to the Department
Rural and Community
Development
May 2020**

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1. Introduction

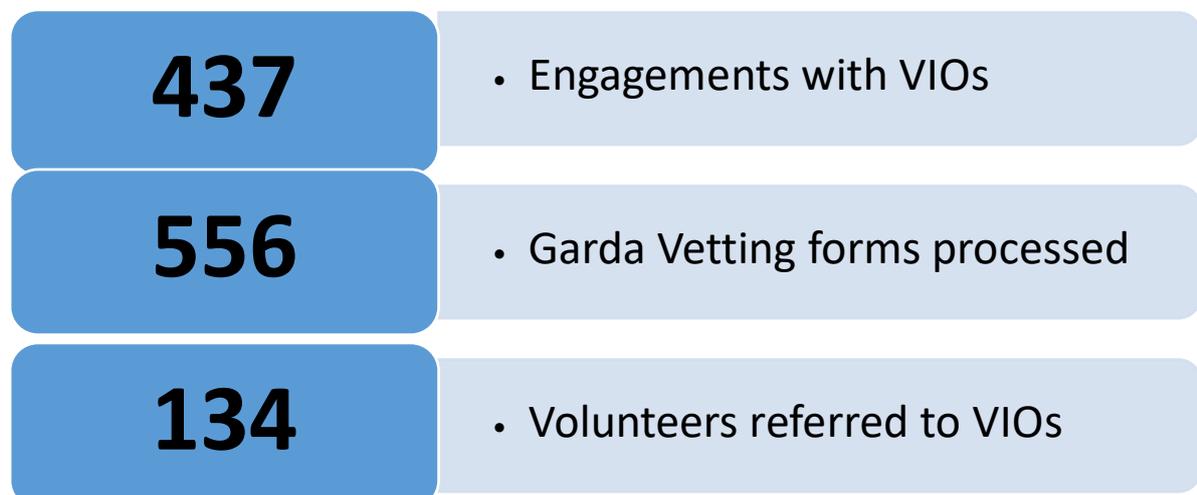
This report highlights the achievements of County Mayo Volunteer Centre in 2019. We offer support to individuals and Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) to reach their individual and collective goals while making a significant contribution to their local community and society.

2. Highlights and Achievements

2.1 Did you know that in 2019?



+



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

94 attendees

Jackie Clarke Collection

Over 55 Club

Community radio

Mayo Roscommon Hospice Shop

Kilmovee Swimming Pool

Ballinameen Community Alert

Castlebar care for the underpriviaged

Aras Inis Gluaire

Ballina Community Centre

Ballycastle Community Centre

Calvary Mission

Clar ICH

Crossmolina Community Alert

Elim Ministries

Mayo North East

Swinford Area CLG

2.2.1 Volunteer Leadership Training

"Love this training, really interesting, looking forward to improving our practices"

"Leah did a great job presenting, she's a natural and it was really enjoyable. ."

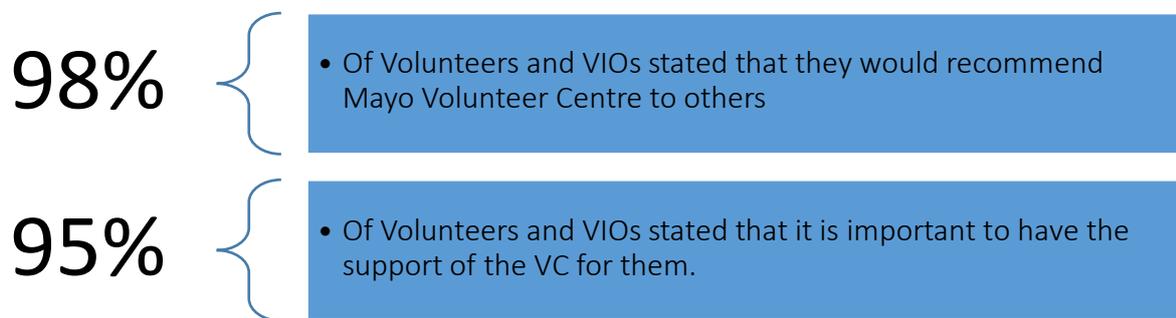
98%

"Really informative, very enjoyable"

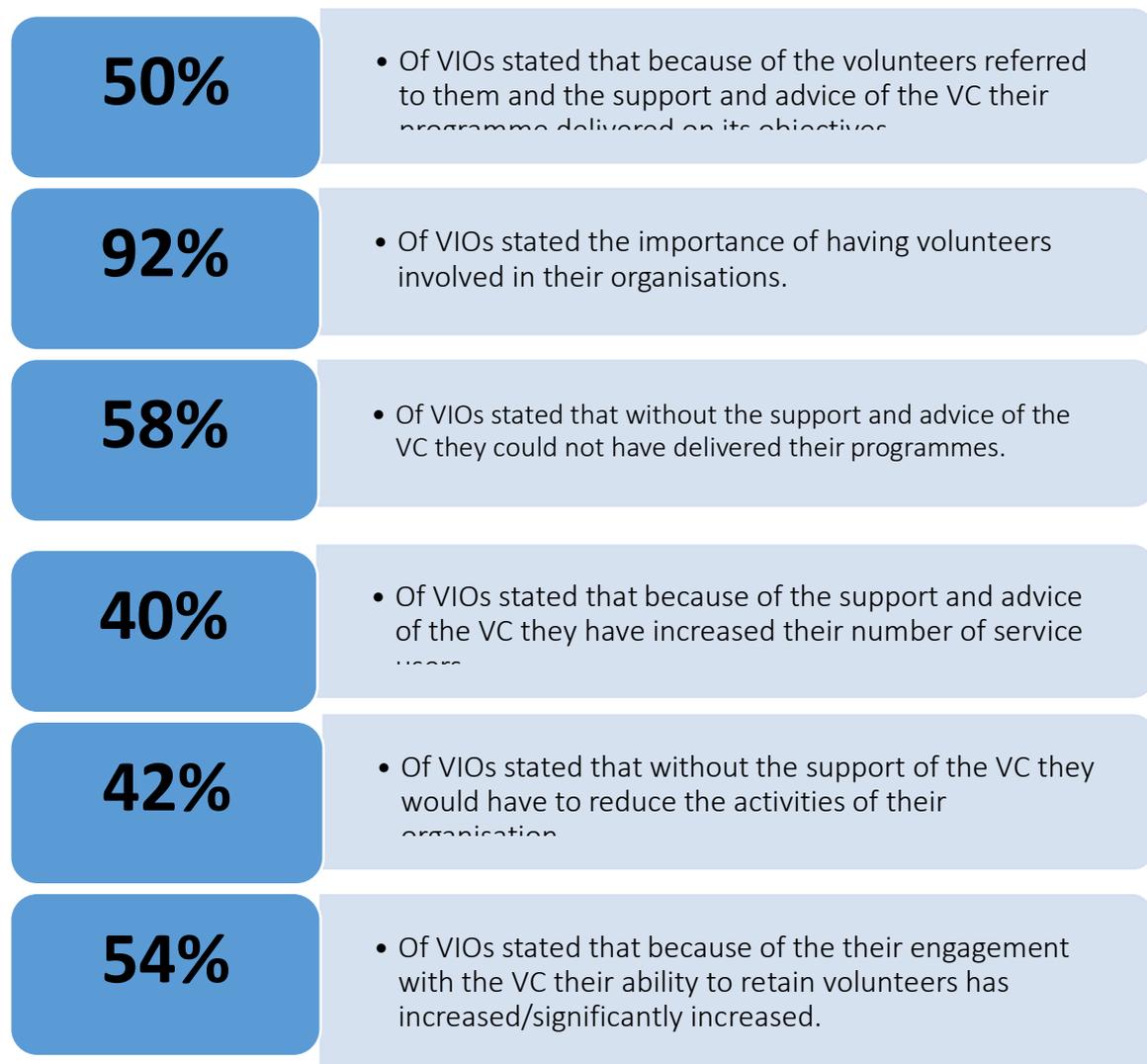
"Glad I took the time to attend"

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.

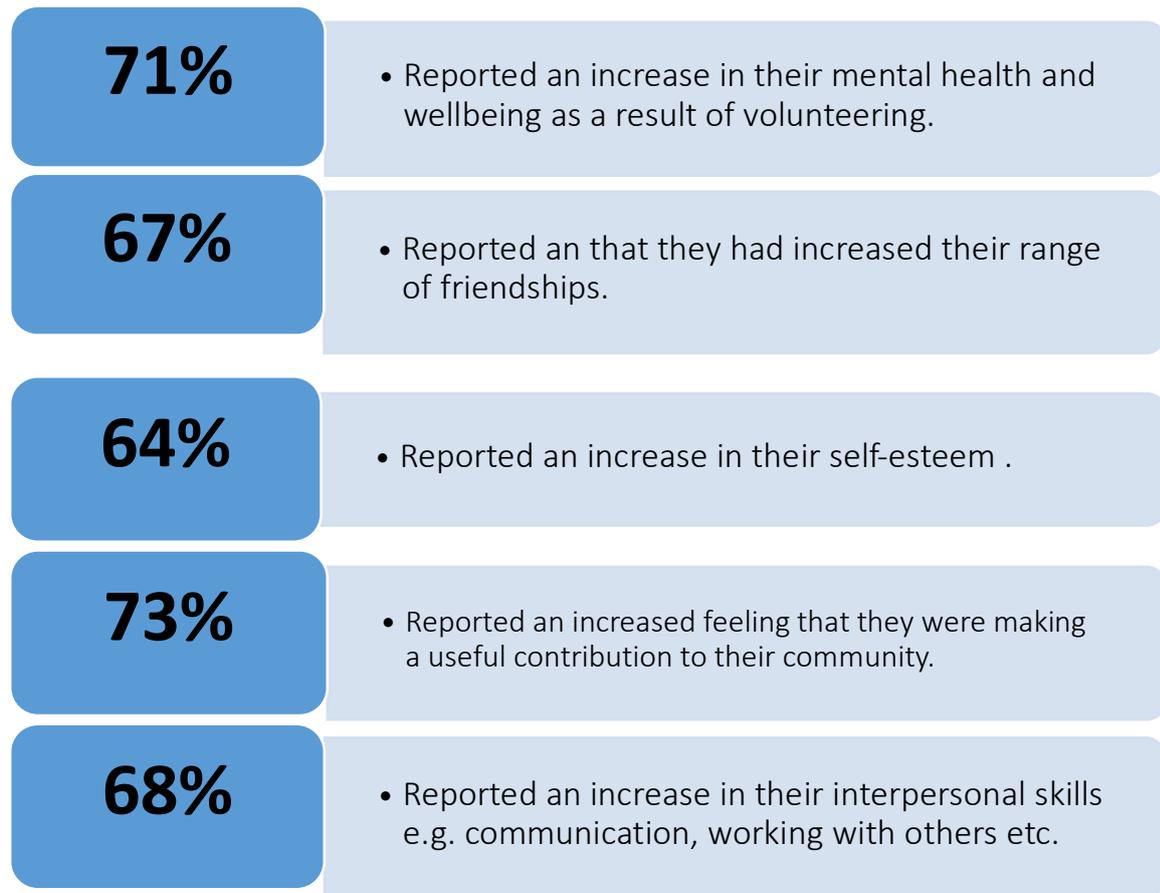


2.2.1 Our Impact on VIOs



Source: VIO Survey

2.2.2 Our Impact on Volunteers.



Source: Volunteer Survey

2.3 Volunteer Stories

75% of Volunteers reported increased confidence in their own abilities following volunteering.



Leo Troy

“I’m capable and able and I feel that as a local to Ballina town I should volunteer and play my part. I like my town and when you give your time to local people you can see the fruits of your labour much more easily than if you are donating money to a far away cause.”

For the Community Boat Trip, Leo takes upon himself to coordinate 23 local boat-owners and local businesses to create a fun day of games, fishing and fun for people with intellectual disabilities. Every summer Leo leads a flotilla of boats from Ballina quay to Bartra Island where the group enjoys cockle picking, fishing, treasure hunting – while another group of volunteers he has recruited prepare a barbecue lunch with supplies donated by local shops and businesses.

It is a big project, but Leo says “I always would recommend that it is better to take on one big thing and give more of yourself to it, rather than giving a little of yourself to a lot of different causes. There is just such a great sense of accomplishment when you can look back and see what you have achieved. You just feel good about yourself. I really believe everyone should and can do something for their community.”

73% Reported an increased sense of belonging to their community.



Ruairí had noticed the great work being done by the shop and the different supports it offers people who are finding life a bit tough financially. He realised quickly that by supporting the shop, he too was supporting the people in his community indirectly.

From working in the shop, Ruairí has met lots of new people and really sees the value of volunteering. He says:

"It's amazing – volunteering has given me confidence in engaging with people. It will help me achieve my silver Gaisce award, it looks great on a CV but most importantly it gives me an opportunity to give something back to my community and help people less fortunate than me."

There is a feel-good factor to that. Ruairí enjoys volunteering and would encourage other young people to get involved in their local communities/charities.

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. With that in mind we engaged and worked with a range of organisations in areas we saw as priorities in 2019.

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 10 different locations in Co.Mayo

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

Encourage people who are unemployed to volunteer to gain experience through volunteering and get experience in different fields

Participated in GMIT Graduation Fair 2019- Helping college leavers gain valuable work experience through volunteering

Inward Migration

Member of the Steering Committee of Diversity Mayo.

We participated in making a short video explaining the benefits of volunteering for migrants. We did this in conjunction with Diversity Mayo.

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 2019

2.5.1 Video Clip with Diversity Mayo

Mayo South West Development Partnership asked Mayo Volunteer Centre to play a lead role in creating a short video clip about the benefits of Volunteering for Migrants. This was one of a series of four clips which was identified as a need by Diversity Mayo.

The main aim of the Video clip was to promote volunteering and present the reasons why migrants should get involved in volunteering. There was a launch of the video clips and it was also shown at the Annual Volunteer Managers Conference organised by Volunteer Ireland and received great feedback.

The clip can be accessed by <https://www.youtube.com/user/southwestmayo>

2.5.2 Bartra Island Day trip and celebration night

Bartra Boat Trip

The annual Western Care Community Boat Trip took place in sunshine in July 2019. The event brings Western Care service users, local boat owners, Mayo Volunteer Centre and a variety of volunteers and volunteers from Ballina Beverages and the local community together to enjoy a fun day out together.

A flotilla of boats departed from the quay on the morning tide under the stewardship of Leo Troy and once everyone arrived on Bartra island the entertainment kicked off with a barbeque, tug of war, fishing, treasure hunt and songs. A huge variety of local suppliers contributed to the lunch.

On the day a volunteer who was not stranger to a camera captured all the activities and fun on the day. This was shown a few weeks later in Ballina where everyone gathered together to watch it on film and be stars of their own show. It was a great night out and everyone thoroughly enjoyed it. Mayo Volunteer centre is already looking forward to 2020!

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.
- In conjunction with other organisations we organise volunteering and community exhibitions across the county.

3.3 Staffing

There are 5 staff

Manager full time – Kathy Rowland

Placement Officer – Full Time – Leah Owens

Placement Officer – Part Time – Edel Gallagher (works two days a week in Ballina)

Assistant Placement Officer – Part Time – Frances Lynott CE scheme and works Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

Assistant Placement Officer – Part Time – Antony Kennedy on Tus Scheme works Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday

The staff ensure that the whole county receives the services offered by Mayo Volunteer Centre. Our main office is in Ballina on Cathedral Road and 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 (urban only) and their populations are (Mayo 2016 Census):

| Major Towns | Population |
|-------------|------------|
| Castlebar | 13,496 |
| Westport | 5,894 |
| Ballina | 10,623 |
| Claremorris | 4,487 |
| Ballinrobe | 3,685 |

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. Overall there has been a slight improvement in relation to deprivation in County Mayo in the period 2006-2016 but levels of deprivation have marginally increased in the intercensal period 2011-2016 from -3.14 to -3.79.

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
HP deprivation Index 2016

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%

