

Combinations of Gainful Employment and Volunteering

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1. Introduction: A new balance of different activities?

A more equal distribution of work is an old issue raised mainly by feminist studies on work. The arrangement of gainful employment and housework is fundamental in this dispute. In the last decade, also volunteering has been explored as a potential for a more balanced relationship between the activities of the individual. This focus was strengthened in public and scientific debates, such as the discussion about the „future of work“, „civil society“ and „social cohesion“. The attention was mainly forced by studies of the nonprofit sector and its structure, characteristics and potentials. As a result, different perspectives and expectations, like the diminution of unemployment, are contributed to the sector as a whole. Therefore, the role of volunteering for the organisations and the community, but also for the subjective understanding and the support of innovative patterns of work were considered. Accordingly, beyond hopes concerning structural potentials, the focus was directed on possible changes on the individual level: New models such as a „triade of work“, „portfoliowork“, „patchwork“, or a new „mix of work“ have been developed. A characteristic feature of all these models is the demand that volunteering should obtain a higher weight in the individual arrangement and contribute to the relativity of the present „dominance“ of gainful employment.

The focus on the combination of activities is closely linked with the question of social integration and participation of individuals in different fields of work. This is the subject of the following article, which deals with the combination of paid and unpaid work, especially the intersection between

gainful employment and volunteering. Since volunteering is often formed in a close relation to the professional background, it shows the „grey area“ of the labour market: Since volunteers try to catch an occupation; there is a field of slight transition between a „normal“ employment and the gratuitous activity; individual patterns of patchwork exist, in which professional acting takes place – both paid and unpaid. The option of acting in different fields, the access to and the specific arrangement of different types of work constitute an indicator of social integration. This aspect indicates the ambivalence, in which social analysis is located: While searching for potentials for sustainable models of work, it also reveals structures of social inequality and of exclusion from the labour market. The search for social innovations is accompanied by a political explosiveness since new arrangements of work can, on the one hand, point to a higher importance of volunteering, and self-determined activities. On the other hand, such a new balance can be based on a forced limitation of employment, which compels the (temporary) acceptance of other, unpaid forms of work. Future research has to bear in mind this reciprocal conditionality between integration, participation and new combinations of activity. The existence of these combinations and also the remaining mass unemployment at present point out the necessity of searching for new dimensions of integration, although gainful employment possesses a key position now and in the future.¹

These images create questions that apply to further social trends and present practices on the individual level. To reduce the distance between theory and reality, it is necessary to take a look at what happens in daily life. This was the aim of a qualitative study that explored the relationship between gainful employment and volunteering on the example of participants in ecological organisations. The study was intended as a „look on the whole“, so that housework, hobbies and other volunteer activities were taken into account, too. The specific connection was examined under two aspects, first the time management, and second the kind of transfers and interactions between these spheres. The analysis was based on the thesis of a „biographical suitability“ (Jakob 1993), which proceeds from the fact that volunteering is surrounded by the actual situation of life and has, in consequence, a special meaning in life. As the individual combination of volunteering and gainful employment has hardly been examined, the study examined people in different situations of gaining and living to discover

1 The „new social question“ seems to ask how to avoid the exclusion of the unemployed, while the „old social question“ consisted in the fight against the exploitation of employees (Dettling 2000: 12).

fundamental modes of relation.

The sample that underlies the following article, reflects the various facets of the phenomenon: Volunteering does not only take place against a stable, but also an insecure, precarious personal background. It can rest on a continuous establishment in the employment system; in other cases it is practised in the absence of a regular job and should include benefits for the professional development. The individual constellations should not be regarded as an expression of a „programmatic“ dealing with new models of work – on the contrary, they emerge from the pragmatic reaction towards the own wishes and possibilities and also the labour market structures.

The following article describes the results of the empirical analysis using the developed typology (1). It provides information about the connection of public and private activities (2) and allows conclusions concerning the social integration (3). Finally, it resumes the inferences for the political formation of a suitable framework (4.). How do people handle different kinds of work, and what kind of relationship exists between the spheres in which they act?

2. Combinations of volunteering and gainful employment: A typology

The following inquiry concentrates on the development, the structure and the contents of both volunteering and gainful employment, on the arrangement of the spheres, the personal effects and the future perspectives. This should allow to estimate the occasion and the motivation, the expectations and the subjective significance of each activity, so that it becomes possible to see volunteering in its entire context (Schumacher 1999; 2002). The field of environmental protection was chosen because trends towards professionalisation of the ecology movement and the often highly professional standards of ecological commitment suggested informative results regarding interactions and transfer processes between the different activities. Moreover, compared to the fields of social services, health care and sports, up to now there has not been much research on environmental protection (Behr et al. 1998).

The study is based on four environmental organisations and initiatives in Berlin. Their objectives differ: The transport team of a large environmental organisation aims at an ecological urban and transport development by working in the fields of education, lobbying and public relations. A further society commits itself to a sustainable arrangement of the immediate living environment and intends to support the issue “Healthy nutrition and living”

by offering education in environmental problems. Finally, the investigation included two citizens' groups, which by means of public relations and political intermediation successfully fought against the building of an incineration plant in Berlin's city area. It would, however, not be sufficient to restrict these forms of engagement only to the field of "environmental protection" as the participants regard their activities as representations of social and political interests as well. Thirty people of different ages, students, employees, unemployed people, and senior citizens built up the sample. The 23 male and seven female participants of the investigation were all residents either of the eastern or the western part of Berlin.

The central question, how gainful employment and volunteering are combined in the conduct of life, has been answered with a typology. This methodological procedure illustrates not only the certain kind of inner logic, in which the activities are related together, but also how the spheres are influenced by each other. The five types are called „mutual strengthening“, „supplement“, „bridging over“, „compensation“ and „alternative task“.

Type: „Mutual Strengthening“

People with a strong orientation towards profession and with the preparedness to spend much time in both their job and their engagement show a mutual strengthening between the activities. Skills and experiences gained in the job and/or in university studies are transferred into volunteering, but this has also a retroactive effect on the other segments of life. The type is characterized through strong interactions between several segments. This phenomenon differs depending on the individual's age and situation: A younger person can expand and test his/her skills. Though the motivation for resistance and political intermediation is primary for him/her, he/she also calculates the possible effects of volunteering on his/her future professional development. In these cases, interactions between the spheres are reflected and estimated as positive, so that synergies are highly welcome. In this context, the engagement can enrich the studies through practical experiences, and also confirm or, in contrary, call the personal choice of occupation in question. Beyond that, volunteering can be transformed into a profession itself.

Commitment as entrance on the way to take up a profession: a student (26 years) reports:

“I have joined an existing working group, where I can apply the knowledge I have because of my studies. I noticed quite fast that in this way I get back a lot. What in turn is a motivation for putting more work into it. In this respect, the two areas complement each other very well. (...) I also try to produce energies, if possible, in order to be able to do both things relatively well despite the limited time budget. In the association I have, apart from fixed factors like knowledge, learned many things that are useful for my professional development. I have learned to become a better speaker and to have a better understanding of political backgrounds.”

In the case of the older members of this type, the synergies are an unintended effect of a sceptical political view, which influences both the job and the engagement. So volunteering benefits from skills of long standing: These can consist in similar contents in job and volunteering, but also, more general, in the way of approaching tasks and treating problems. Volunteering itself has consequences on the self consciousness and strengthens the competencies for fulfilling the job. Moreover, it is characteristic that members of this type are critical with regard to volunteering: It should be joyful, but also efficient and designed according to aims and success. While the interactions between gainful employment, university studies and volunteering are rather strong, transfers to or from privacy are less estimated. The logic of action is referred to the public sphere in a high extent, while familiar tasks are (yet) not existent or (temporarily) delegated to other people in the household, especially the wives. Thus, participants are winning temporal resources for job and volunteering. A personal commitment to the volunteer action, which rests on the specific importance or urgency of a particular problem, leads to a high readiness for action. At the same time, this appreciation can collide with every-day arrangements: This can be the negligence of friendships, housework or hobbies or the overstressing of the family and the partnership. This arrangement becomes easier if the patchwork is less complex, for example if there are no children living in the household.

Type: „Supplement“

The second striking kind of how the activities are related to each other is the type „supplement“: Volunteering is part of an individual arrangement, in which the job or the family are central and temporal intensive. Accordingly, volunteering is reduced and has the function of a completion in the sense of a spare-time-activity. It takes place while the professional situation is marked by a far-reaching satisfaction. The manner in which it is realized, depends on

the coordinates of the other spheres, so that it is not playing the leading part. Two variations of supplement can be distinguished: First, it can be limited by *external* constraints. The demands of other spheres and problems with their coordination lead to a reduced engagement. While it could have been very intensive in the past, it is limited now because an exhausting phase of examination or high requirements in the actual job occurs.² In other biographical circumstances, the relation would be probably more intensive, because often a nearness to the profession or/and an inner obligation to the treated theme are obvious. Beyond that, the supplementary function can be caused, secondly, by an *inner* limitation: In these cases the relationship between the spheres is weaker and the participants set other priorities, especially concerning the family, the job or spare time activities. So the limitation is initiated by the participants themselves rather than by external conditions. Their personal background is relatively continuous. While similarities in substance between gainful employment and engagement are rare, they emphasize – in a pragmatic, sober way – their „normal human capacities“ and that they do, what can be done. In these cases, volunteering often has an assisting character. Therefore, the interactions at this type extend from a weak connection to a far-reaching conformity of contents. Altogether, questions of coordination, organisation of the weekday and personal resources in time and of strength are major in the reflections of these participants. If the stress gets too strong, they tend to reduce or finish their engagement rather than other obligations. Two aspects have a great influence on the specific „engagement-profile“: the disposal of free time and the subjective meaning of the activity and its weight in comparison to the other spheres.

Type: „Bridging Over“

In the case of the type „bridging over“, volunteering is realised during a phase of unemployment or, more general, in a discontinuous gainful activity. It is not only based on motivations of political co-determination or resistance, but also on the intention to prove and practise personal skills, improve competencies and remain in the world of work. So volunteering should

² This constellation is intensified in the case of East-German actors of middle age, who had to adapt to a new labour market and whose professional biography is marked by interruptions.

contain a professional utility. Under positive circumstances, it can bridge over to an employment in the „first“ or „second“ labour market. It is characteristic for this constellation that the engagement will be finished or transformed into a gainful employment if the outer framework is changing. However, this is not the only type, at which this kind of professional „investment“ plays a role – as shown by the example of the type „mutual strengthening“. The connections between the spheres are intensive, since volunteering has an important impact on the personal development. It often has a close relation to the professional background, so that it continues the former way or makes feasible new elements. This includes that volunteering and further development cannot strictly be shaped, but are interlinked. In the case of this type it is exceptionally evident that the empirical results are based on an analysis of *present* arrangements of work.

The hopes connected with volunteering are not only related to professional development, but also to social integration: Through their engagement the volunteers stay active and keep a social surrounding alive. Though it cannot represent a substitution for gainful employment, the activity stabilises situations of biographical interruption: The members of this type do not see their professional career at an end, but themselves in a kind of transition. They wish to apply their skills in a future occupation, however these expectations are not inevitably adjusted to a traditional, „normal“ employment, but to other, fragmentary or flexible forms. In consequence, this type includes changes of the personal status and passages between unpaid work and gainful employment: The actors prepare a future job on the basis of volunteering or they continue a former, publicly promoted employment as volunteers. At the moment, their engagement is a kind of „second-best-solution“, with advantages concerning autonomy and sense, but on the basis of an exclusion from the labour market. It demands dealing with uncertainty and can sometimes become a „fight“. A satisfying former professional career and the embodiment in the surrounding seem to influence the will for participation in a positive way.

Type: „Compensation“

The type „compensation“ is characterized by dissatisfaction with the actual employment. This manifests itself in the wish to change the situation and to search a new professional direction. While volunteering can also be compensatory in other constellations, this aspect is marked in the case of the

type „compensation“. The contrast between volunteering and the job situation is evident, especially concerning the autonomy, the co-management, the hierarchy or the climate in the company. While one or more of these aspects have a negative accent in the situation in the job, they have, on the contrary, positive connotations within the scope of volunteering. The actors can apply competencies that are not demanded in the actual occupation in another segment of weekday. Thus, the engagement compensates the deficits in the job by gaining new knowledge, taking part in actual social debates or keeping oneself „on the running“. The participants also appreciate the specific kind of work, the cooperative aspect.

The compensatory function is more or less reflected and developed strategically: In one case it appears as a clear and aspired aim, in another case it represents a side effect, which results from a high level of personal activity. The intensity of the compensatory character varies: The voluntary activity is practised in the sense of „doing something else besides the job“ or it almost becomes a substitution that only allows to realise the own capacities. Then it is nearly becoming an equivalent to the employment and is connected with a great dedication and significance. The difference to the later explained type „alternative task“ is the present embodiment in the employment system. An inner relationship between the job and volunteering is often refused by the actors. Although similarities in their contents are possible, or obvious, these should not be deepened, so that volunteering should be „something particular and own“. Elements of a former employment, which suited to the participant's competencies, are reflected and transferred more willingly. If the professional situation remains the same, the compensatory function will probably continue. Otherwise, for example if duties in the job are expanded and include more challenges, volunteering perhaps will be reduced in favour of the employment. But altogether it is appreciated as a self-determined action in a segment beside the working place, a segment that contains less stress and represents a part of quality of life.

Type: „Alternative Task“

Voluntary work can represent an important responsibility if the phase of occupation or bringing up children is finished and a participation in the system of employment is no longer intended or probable. The effects carried by volunteering are, apart from income, similar to those normally associated with employment: the development of social contacts, the structuring of the

weekday, the use and maintenance of capabilities or the gaining of social appreciation. Volunteering in this type is based on a motivation of participation and becomes a meaningful leisure activity. If the former orientation towards the profession was strong, the engagement also embodies an prolongation of this into retirement. Accordingly, the male actors of this type continue an attitude aligned to the public sphere. Beyond it, the older actors in this type personify an „active age“, which perhaps will play a role in future demographic trends.

Commitment as a task at old age, a comment by a pensioner (74 years):

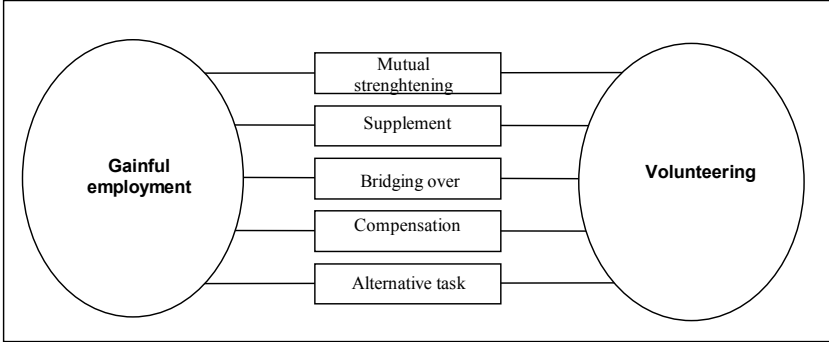
„It is a task at old age ... I can't sit around all day without doing anything apart from twiddling my thumbs (...). I do not want to rust out, I want to remain in motion as long as possible, otherwise I'm going to shrivel (...).“

If an employment does not exist due to other priorities or a sceptical assessment of one's own chances in the labour market, volunteering is an alternative task also in the phase of the „empty nest“. Nevertheless, the material background has to be secured if the voluntary activity shall be an alternative. So, this type is connected to a household type based on a traditional division of labour or a traditional understanding of the „normal employee“.

Commitment as an opportunity to orient oneself new and to try out again: an account by an unemployed woman (41 years):

„When M. told me that she also works in an association, I found it very interesting, because if one does not have a profession any more and therefore no social environment, no colleagues – I thought, such an association is maybe not bad for meeting like-minded people. Not as a substitute for the working world, but in order to have a community. This education in environmental problems is a good synthesis, which enabled me to combine professional and private interests and the interest in children. And as I was involved in the project development, I hope, of course, to be able to become active here, too.“

Interactions between volunteering and gainful employment



Source: own graph.

Concerning the embodiment of volunteering in the conduct of life, the findings of the elaborated five types show different aspects. They illustrate that it is varying according to the material, personal and the resources in time, the own attitudes and the expectations for the future. Accordingly, the manner in which the activities are related to each other is influenced by the actual employment situation, the familiar tasks, the support in the personal surrounding, the material security and also by former professional and volunteer experiences. Each individual constellation leads to an own volunteer „profile“ concerning continuity, extent, intensity, personal importance or the transfer of competencies, though there are also certain similarities as has been shown by the five types. The arrangement is more or less frictionless: Some actors organise the complexity nearly without a conflict, in other cases it comes to collisions with other segments. The negligence of other spheres of life or the overstrain of personal relations can be the consequence. As a rule, negative stress is accepted for a certain time and under specific circumstances, if volunteering is also connected with positive stress and fun. Handling individual time arrangements, the actors try to coordinate the different spheres: If volunteering is estimated as very important, some of the actors reduce the time spent with their family or friends. Others reduce or break off from their voluntary work, if the burden in other spheres is too heavy. Concerning the actors who are in a regular employment the latter builds the outer frame and decides about the remaining temporal resources.

What can be said about the interactions and transfers between the spheres? Altogether, the inner logic of the relationship can, on the one side, be loosely coupled, so that volunteering is a kind of „alternative programme“. On the other side, and more often, there are distinct interactions and reciprocal influences: For instance, professional or general competencies are transferred from the job into the voluntary action.³ At the same time learning processes in the engagement have an effect both in the occupation and in the private sphere. The processes, which are often autodidactic, facilitate the entrance into the professional job or lead to further education during the employment. Beyond this, these are appreciated as elements of the not only professional, but personal development. Sometimes the contents in the job, in studies and in volunteering are overlapping and the spheres are nearly merging into each other, while in other cases the actors practise

3 This assertion is related to volunteering in the field of „ecology“, which is characterised through a high level of qualification. To create general estimations it is also necessary to have a look at the other thematic fields of commitment.

clearer demarcations between „work“ and „leisure“.

By working out a typology it is possible to illustrate both poignant mutualities and the variety of these arrangements. For the adequate understanding of the typology it has to be considered that the types indicate, on the one side a specific logic of interrelation. On the other side, it can also exist an additional meaning, if for instance a compensatory function is coupled with a mutual strengthening. These and other typical relations can appear at one and the same personal constellation at the same time. The classification with one type was based on the most significant aspect. Beyond that, the specific relation can change over time, so that, for instance, a former constellation of „bridging over“ turns into a „supplement“. Including this coincidence, ambiguity and historical changeableness, the five types name striking characteristics of these connections, but they remain an approach to reality: As conceptual constructions they represent a condensation of a pithy distinction and enable a more concrete imagination of the practices found in daily life.

3. Public-private-arrangements

Altogether, the results illustrate the significance of how the participants move in the public and in the private sphere. The combinations of volunteering and gainful employment are based on different crucial points concerning paid and unpaid work. While some constellations show a strong orientation on the public sphere, that is realised through both an intensive occupation and volunteering, other participants try to obtain a greater balance between private and public activities. These demarcations are not always clear, since volunteering leads to friendly relations, so that it is not only a public concern, but also gets a private element.

Concerning the gender aspect, the results indicate enduring patterns of the division of work. Although the sample gives an insight only into a small part of the volunteers in a specific field – volunteering in ecological organisations and initiatives – it points to general characteristics concerning the participation of the sexes. The data shows that the embodiment of women in the professional system is weaker than that of men.⁴ More often, their professional biography reflects the ties with the familiar domain, for example

4 Again, the specific character of the sample has to be considered: All of the unemployed actors are former GDR-citizens.

on grounds of bringing up children or nursing relatives, but the discontinuity is also due to the political change in the year 1989. Accordingly, the engagement of women often serves a new professional orientation and the appropriation and training of new skills. In contrast, the male participants more often reflect a secure social position, an accumulation of success both in profession and volunteering and have the opportunity to delegate housework. In the presence of the generally increasing ruptures in professional biographies and the structural change of the employment system, the stabilising function will probably touch the work-arrangements of men in a similar way.

The gender aspect was substantiated in actual studies (Zierau 2000; Klenner et al. 2001; Stecker in this volume) that also illustrate the differences concerning the extent, the thematic fields and the compatibility with the engagement: Volunteering of men is more extensive and often settled in formal public functions, while volunteering of women more often takes place in social, health related or religious fields. Accordingly, men of middle age in a household of several people with children seem to be the most engaged population group (Erlinghagen et al. 1997).⁵ With regard to compatibility, women more often seem to solve the question of coordination *before* they begin an engagement, while this demand preoccupies men, *after* they have already begun (Klenner et al. 2001).

The variety of combinations illustrated by the five types shows that – if one remembers the models of a more balanced distribution of work – an evaluation of the given mode of arrangement in the sense of „right“ or „wrong“ is neither reasonable nor possible. Viewing the ambivalence and complexity of the topic, one ideal measure does not make sense: The combination of gainful employment and volunteering on a high level in time, for instance, represents an active behaviour in the civil society, nevertheless it points to the remaining of gender patterns. The fulfilling of housework by a service is a further example for another mode of distribution. The utopian models encourage the public debate, but have to be contrasted with the diversity in practice.

5 Generally it is questionable if male engagement is really stronger than the female or if this estimation is only based on a higher visibility of the first one, so that the reality would not have been reflected appropriately (Duscheleit 2000).

4. Demands on the political framework

The combination of different kinds of work is complex: It consists of a synchronical or diachronical mix of paid or unpaid activities; one or more voluntary actions are combined with remuneration activities, public employment, advanced training or variations of self-employment. In addition, they are involved in family work and raising up children. The findings have shown several strategies and problems of the arrangement, which is a matter of priorities, attitudes and resources. But this conscious and strategic organisation of the spheres is also determined by bounds in the outer framework, which point to the tasks for political forming. These requirements are revealing themselves in the points of friction and in the difficulties appearing in practice. They concern the coordination of volunteering with the other spheres as well as the space in it. So it is not only a matter of „volunteer policy“ in the sense of support, but also of other policies, which can be conducive to individual arrangements.

Which aspects must be taken into account, both in a supportive and a restrictive meaning? Though a variety of factors influence volunteering and the willingness to do it, gainful employment has a central meaning: It often entails, in a positive light, experiences and competencies that raise the preparedness for social participation, but also it often leads to its limitation because of temporal reasons. Indeed some of the actors in an employment perform an intensive engagement in addition to an excessive full-time job. But they mention that it brings a reduction of life quality and strains the personal relationships. The situation is ambivalent: Although several people wish a shorter work time and mention a better distribution of gainful employment „on more shoulders“, the subjective meaning of it is not decreasing. Questions of how to secure the existence, to get into a gainful employment and to accomplish the assignments in the job are playing an important role, especially in the case of younger persons. This supports the estimation that life seems to be no longer *centred* around gainful employment, since other fields in life have become more important – yet people are possibly more *oriented* to it (Verbundprojekt Arbeit und Ökologie 2000; Mutz 1999). The proceeding examples show that the job is, as a rule, mapping out the possibilities for other activities. Because of this key position it is now handled more fully. After that, some further aspects concerning the framework of volunteering will be treated more sketchily.

Since the disposal of time is fundamental for volunteering, working time policy can improve the conditions for practising and combining diverse

activities. The examined group of volunteers shows that the extent of work, and not the flexibility of working time is problematic. This finding is also underlined by a further study that flexible working time must not be complicating in any case, but can ameliorate the sovereignty in time; though it proved that length, position, and foresight of working time can be important restrictions for an engagement (see Klenner/Pfahl in this volume). Altogether, the informal autonomous handling of the own working hours is a heavy factor to arrange the spheres (in the same place). Working time policy concerns the extent of the working time as well as the possibility to change flexibly between the activities if this is wanted. The shortening of working time is an old, but actually not very popular demand. Generally, the enlargement of part time work or models of a life-working-time seem to be more promising than a collective shortening of the weekly working time. Concerning the change between different activities, the right for exemption could be enlarged and facilitated. The study of Klenner et al. (2001: 266) states that only a small part of the interviewed people (19 percent) insist on a paid release from gainful employment for volunteer activities. Beyond that, only a very small part of these people really make *use* of this right, which may be due to the working climate and an increasing concentration of work (Verdichtung).

The data shows that possible measures are linked to structural and cultural aspects. Since, actually, a release only refers to traditional honorary posts like professional representation of interests, lay assessor, fire brigade or disaster operation, the enlarging of the thematic fields could be such a structural measure. Although a differentiation between an engagement primarily oriented on public welfare or on private self-help is perhaps not always clear, such an extension would appreciate the social importance of the other fields.⁶ Beyond such a release in the daily perspective, it could be installed also in the long term, for instance through sabbaticals or other kinds of temporary exit. Such transitions should be institutionally secured, as it is demanded in the model of transitional labour markets (Schmid 1999).

At last, the obvious working time in each company is influenced by a specific enterprise culture and the company's view on the „work-life-balance“. This concerns the arrangement of job and family, but also of job and volunteering. Though the so-called social competencies are received verbally, the possibilities of appropriating them in other fields besides gainful employment are often impeded. New elements of a „corporate social

6 Also if self-help is perhaps concentrated on the improvement of the own life-quality, one has to recognise that it may have indirect positive effects on the community level.

responsibility“ (CSR) shall improve this appreciation (Mutz 2000; Janning/Bartjes 1999). The CSR shall be a way to strengthen the enterprises' consciousness of their local responsibility, which includes a higher acknowledgement of their employees' volunteering. At the moment, this culture can be estimated as underdeveloped in Germany, since a rethinking of companies has hardly begun and the public welfare is related to the state rather than to the society

(Neuhoff 1992). At the moment, it is an open question to which extent the CSR could lead to a stronger networking between enterprises, nonprofit organisations and the local community.

The following aspects, which were mentioned by the actors, illustrate the spectrum of further supporting conditions. Beyond the organisation of the working time the material security is another fundamental precondition, as it has been mentioned above by viewing „social integration“. Though the „grey area“ between volunteering and employment is yet existing and cannot be denied, the aim of social-policy should be that volunteering plays an additional and not a replacing role. The actors also demand an improvement of the rights of participation: At the moment, according to a frequent estimation, the willingness of the voluntary actors to co-determine is often not accepted by the public institutions (Münkler 2000). These have to develop an interest in the co-operation of the citizens, so that both the „will“ and the „permission“ can be transferred. In addition to that, the local infrastructure must be ameliorated for the purpose of the self-organisation of the citizens; this includes the material and personal infrastructure as well as a more intensive cooperation with the local administration. These demands underline that the specific expression of volunteering is not only a question of „inner willingness“ and the private situation, but also a public concern. The professional identity, the concrete situation in the job as well as other personal and biographic factors are influencing the way of seeing oneself and of being capable and obliged to take part in society. Beyond that the finally named aspects point to the state of the community, the legal and material infrastructure, and the civic culture. The outlined demands referring to this indicate that Third-Sector-Policies – municipal-, education-, social-, structure-, working time- and labour market policies – have to be coordinated. The undertaken and the omitted political measures reflect the public appreciation of different activities and the current contemporary understanding of work. The predominant definition gives information, which activity is seen as productive and important in each specific society.

Future studies have to investigate to what extent volunteering can really bridge over or if it leads to remainin unpaid work. Also questions concerning the quality of the informal further development and its public recognition have arisen. The results stress the importance of studying the practice on the micro-level. By taking this perspective, the potentials for new models of work, more exact the favourable and the hindering aspects of succeeding arrangements can be estimated appropriately.

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