

weltwärts



Der entwicklungspolitische Freiwilligendienst

FINDINGS OF THE 2014 WELTWÄRTS PROGRAMME VOLUNTEER SURVEY

uzbonn

Richtig fragen.

uzbonn GmbH – Gesellschaft für empirische
Sozialforschung und Evaluation

www.uzbonn.de

Dear reader,

This report presents the findings of the second annual volunteer survey. Following the survey of the 2013 returnees, this survey looked at the volunteers who returned from service in 2014. We would like to start by highlighting one result in particular: as in the previous year, 94% of the respondents were satisfied overall with their voluntary service. This figure confirms that the weltwärts programme meets the needs of young adults. And it shows how diligently the sending and partner organisations run the development volunteers service.

Each year, there are more than 3,300 volunteers in service in more than 60 host countries, sent there by 180 different organisations. 1,974 volunteers participated in the survey (which was again conducted by Umfragezentrum Bonn), putting the response rate at a pleasing 62%.

The volunteer survey is part of the weltwärts quality system introduced in 2013. The system provides a methodology and standards for the participating organisations' efforts to improve their volunteer services. The quality system comprises the following components:

- quality certification of the sending organisations by external certification bodies,
- quality development by the sending organisations in the quality associations,
- the work group on quality, which conducts quality management at the programme level, and
- the annual volunteer survey.

The quality criteria for the development volunteer services are set out in the weltwärts guideline and quality standards.

The sending organisations and their partner organisations in the Global South are responsible for running the services. The quality of the services results from and evolves in a dialogue between the various stakeholders in the volunteer services: the volunteers, the partners overseas and the sending organisations. Within the different partnerships different instruments are used for quality development. A number of the sending organisations also use the weltwärts "accompanying measures" funding tool.

The volunteer survey reflects volunteers' opinions and views regarding their period of service a few months after their return. The weltwärts quality work group and the quality associations, with their member organisations and their partner organisations, then consider and process the findings. The data collected in the annual volunteer survey serves as an indicator of quality and quality issues.

The volunteer survey is the part of the quality system that, through standardised questions, enables all of a cohort's volunteers to give anonymous feedback on their period of service. It supplements the forms of feedback and evaluation used by the sending organisations and their partners in their support activities for volunteers.

The volunteer survey therefore plays a dual role in the programme:

- The programme's quality work group discusses and evaluates the data from the survey.
- The quality associations, the sending organisations and their partners overseas can share information about the volunteers' views regarding their satisfaction with and the quality of the programme as a whole. This enables the players involved in the voluntary work to verify whether their own evaluation and quality instruments are adequate and appropriate.

The findings of the volunteer survey are one building block in a comprehensive quality system, designed to constantly evolve the programme into a development learning and exchange service for the volunteers and the partners in the North and South.

Looking at the findings of this second volunteer survey, we can say that they corroborate the previous year's findings for the most part. Once again, the volunteers' overall assessment of the service is good. This is true of each of the individual phases, i.e. preparation, assignment and post-assignment. The weltwärts programme is intended to be a development learning service. So it is particularly pleasing to see that the overwhelming majority of the volunteers feel that participating in the programme was an enriching experience. They are particularly positive in their assessment of how the volunteer service influenced their own openness towards other cultures and people, their global awareness and their personal development in general. They also feel that their time with weltwärts had a positive influence on their motivation to play an active role in society and to develop a keener interest in development-related, social and political issues.

But the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development and the civil society organisations behind the programme do not see these good results as a licence to leave things as they are. Even when problems or dissatisfaction are only voiced by the minority of volunteers, we will still analyse the causes and work on improving what needs to be improved. However, with the previous year's findings confirmed by this year's, we are all the more convinced that the weltwärts programme is on the right track.

Birgit Pickel

Head of the Division for

Civic Engagement; weltwärts; Engagement Global
Committee

at the Federal Ministry of Economic

Cooperation and Development

Jan Gildemeister

Civil Society Coordinator on the

weltwärts Programme Steering

FINDINGS OF THE 2014 WELTWÄRTS PROGRAMME VOLUNTEER SURVEY

Survey sample and response rate

The target group of the second volunteer survey for the weltwärts programme comprised all of those volunteers who completed their service in 2014. Fully completed surveys were provided by 1,974 volunteers, making the response rate 62%. Willingness to participate in the volunteer survey was therefore almost exactly as high as in the previous year (2013 volunteer survey).

The respondents participated in the weltwärts programme through 161 different sending organisations and worked in 64 different countries. The five top destinations were South Africa, India, Tanzania, Bolivia and Peru. All of Germany’s 16 federal states were represented among the respondents. The breakdown of volunteers per federal state is largely proportionate to the population figures for each federal state.

More women participate in the weltwärts programme than men. The share of women among the respondents was thus much higher than that of men. The ratio roughly corresponded to that among the weltwärts programme volunteers. The respondents were in the age group 18 to 30 though most of them were at the younger end of the group. The average age was 21.

The survey findings show that most of the volunteers (82%) joined the weltwärts programme straight after they finished their schooling. In the majority of cases, they held an “Abitur” school-leaving qualification (94%). The overwhelming majority of the respondents did not yet have a professional qualification (85%). Those who did tended to have gained it from a conventional university or a university of applied sciences rather than through vocational training.

Twelve of the individuals who participated in the volunteer survey had an officially recognised disability or a certificate of disability (as defined in Volume IX of Germany’s Social Code), thus accounting for less than 1% of the respondents. As such, there are still not many disabled participants in the weltwärts programme.

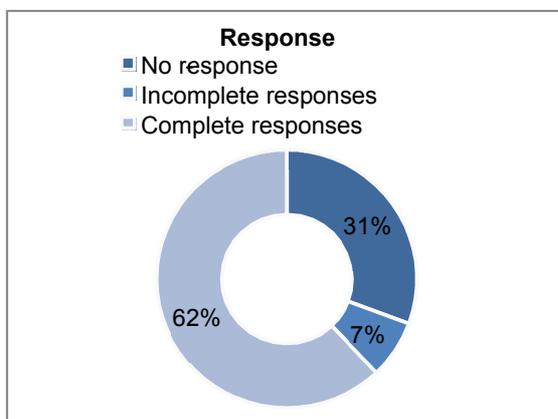


Figure 1: Response rate

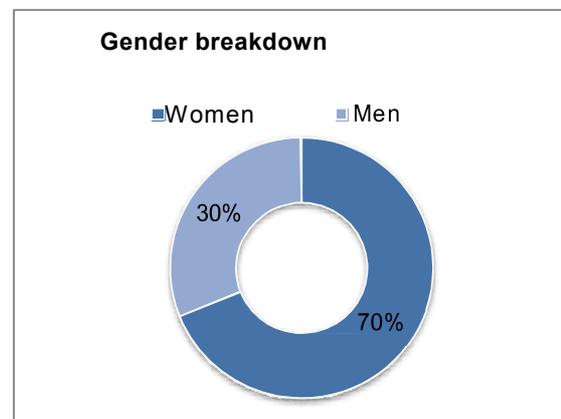


Figure 2: Gender breakdown

At 13%, the share of volunteers with a migrant background was lower than the corresponding share in Germany’s overall population (20%)¹. However, if only the share of persons with a migrant background and German citizenship and persons born in Germany is taken as the basis for comparison, the share of volunteers with a migrant background on the weltwärts programme corresponds exactly to the 13%.

All in all, these findings correspond to those of the 2013 volunteer survey and there are thus no structural differences in the sociodemographic composition of the volunteer sample compared to the previous year.

Satisfaction

Overall, the volunteers were very positive in their evaluation of the weltwärts programme. Two thirds were very satisfied with their voluntary service overall. Taking the volunteers who were “quite satisfied” into account too, 94% of all volunteers were satisfied overall (see Figure 3). Consequently, the level of satisfaction with the weltwärts programme voluntary service has remained consistently high from the 2013 to the 2014 volunteer surveys.

The information given in the open comments section by the 2014 volunteers who were quite or very dissatisfied overall with their voluntary service on the weltwärts programme shows that this was mostly due to the specific situation at their place of assignment whilst they were abroad.

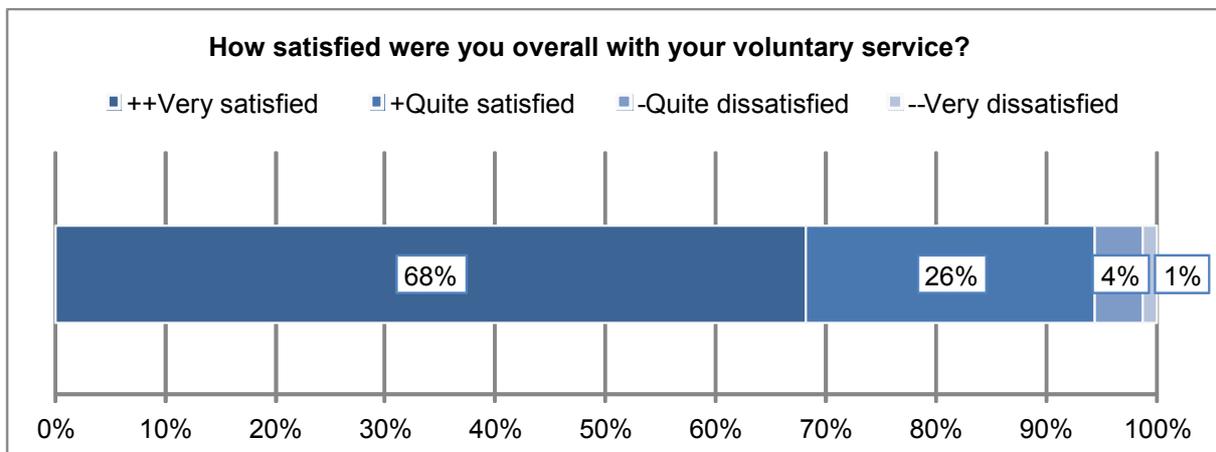


Figure 3: Respondents’ overall satisfaction with their voluntary service

This positive assessment of the respondents’ voluntary service is also reflected in their degree of willingness to recommend the weltwärts programme to their friends. More

¹ Germany’s Federal Statistical Office defines a person with a migrant background as someone who holds foreign citizenship or was born abroad and immigrated to Germany post 1949, or someone who was born in Germany and naturalised or who has a parent who immigrated to Germany, was naturalised or is a foreign national. The 20% referred to above therefore includes both Germans and foreign nationals, some of whom are immigrants themselves. Results of the 2014 microcensus: [https:// www. destatis. de/ DE/ PresseService/ Presse/ Pressemitteilungen/ 2015/ 08/ PD15_ 277_ 122. html](https://www.destatis.de/DE/PresseService/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2015/08/PD15_277_122.html) [accessed on 4 August 2015]

than 70% of the volunteers considered it very likely² that they would recommend the programme overall to their friends and the same percentage were very likely to recommend an assignment in the country they went to. Over 60% were very likely to recommend volunteering on the weltwärts programme through their sending organisation. Compared to the previous year, the share of volunteers who would recommend volunteering with the sending organisation for which they worked fell by 5%.

The ratings for the places of assignment and the host organisations in the host countries were more cautious: the share of volunteers who were very likely to recommend these to their friends was slightly higher than 40% in each instance (see Figure 4).

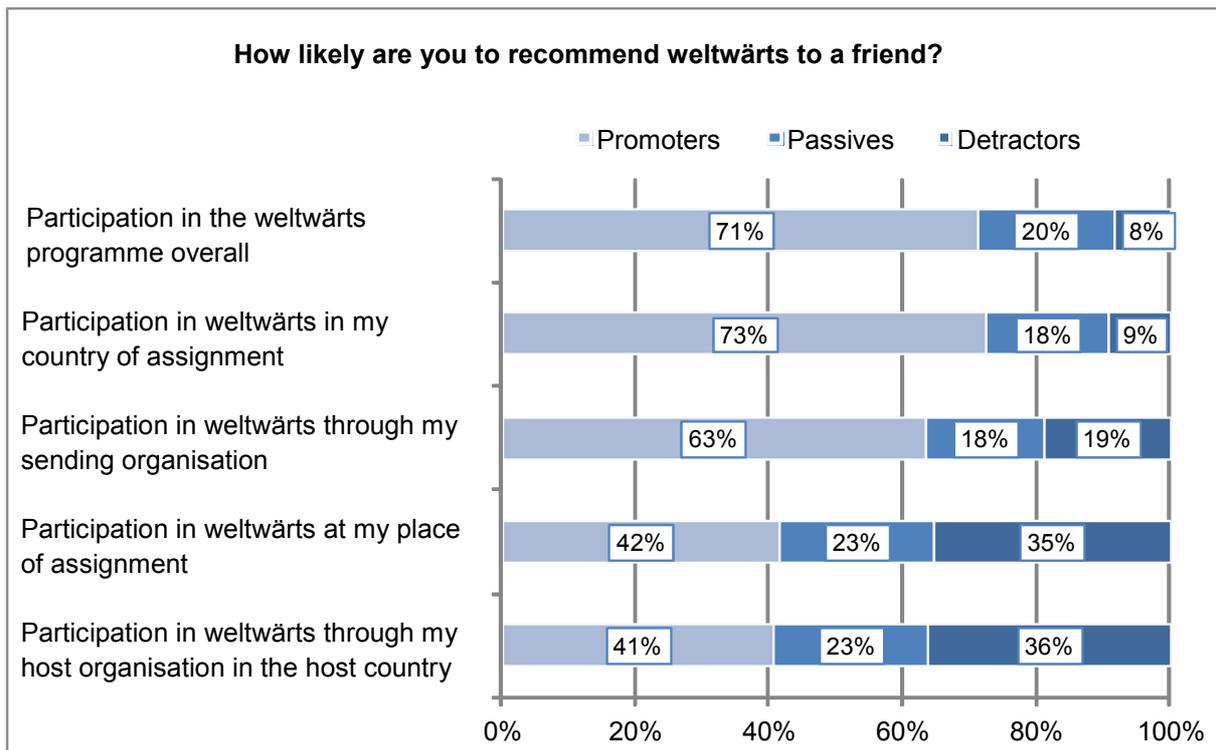


Figure 4: Willingness to recommend the weltwärts programme overall, the country of assignment, sending organisation, host organisation and place of assignment.³

Preparation for the voluntary service

The majority of the volunteers were positive in their evaluation of how the sending organisations prepared them for their voluntary service. More than 90% were very or quite satisfied overall with the support they received from their sending organisation during the preparation phase. The share of volunteers who were very satisfied with the way their sending organisation prepared them rose by 6% from 2013 to 2014.

The majority of the volunteers were also very positive in their assessment of the preparation and support they received from the sending organisations regarding preventive healthcare

² 9 and 10 on a value scale from 0=Very unlikely to 10=Very likely.

³ Willingness to recommend the programme to others was measured on a scale of 0 (very unlikely) to 10 (very likely). The responses were then grouped in the following categories: ratings of 10 and 9 were promoters; ratings of 6 or lower were detractors; and the rest were passives.

(e.g. on recommended vaccinations or health insurance during the assignment) and how to protect their health while on assignment overseas (e.g. information about drinking water). The level of satisfaction with the support provided by the sending organisations remained consistently high in these areas between the 2013 and 2014 surveys.

More than half of the volunteers were very satisfied with the support the sending organisations gave with formal aspects of their entry into the respective country and their stay abroad, e.g. visas and residence permits. In the 2014 volunteer survey, around 90% were again very or quite satisfied. A direct comparison with the previous year's findings shows that the share of volunteers who were very satisfied with the support given by the sending organisations regarding visas, permits of residence, work permits, etc. dropped by 5%. The findings of the 2014 volunteer survey also illustrate that most of the volunteers had a residence permit or a visa throughout their period of service abroad (89%). In total, 11% stated that they did not. The number of cases of difficulties with visas or residence permits therefore remained low. Having said that, the share of volunteers affected by such issues increased by 3% between the 2013 and 2014 surveys.

The preparation given by the sending organisations in terms of safety and security was also viewed positively by the majority. In particular, most of the volunteers were very satisfied with the information concerning and the contact data for the key contact people on the ground (e.g. the emergency cards). Most of them were also satisfied with the information regarding the general security situation in the country of assignment and what to do in the event of an emergency or crisis there. However, in both areas less than half of the volunteers were very satisfied with the preparation. The level of satisfaction with the preparatory information on safety and security remained consistently high between the 2013 and 2014 surveys.

Particularly when compared with the overall high level of volunteer satisfaction with the support given by the sending organisations in all other areas, the volunteers' assessment of the preparation they received for their specific place of assignment and the work to be done there was lower. Only around half were satisfied. This finding corresponds to that of the 2013 volunteer survey. The information reported in the open comments section by those volunteers who were not particularly satisfied overall with their preparation also shows that many volunteers would have liked their preparation to be more in line with the requirements and tasks at their specific place of assignment.

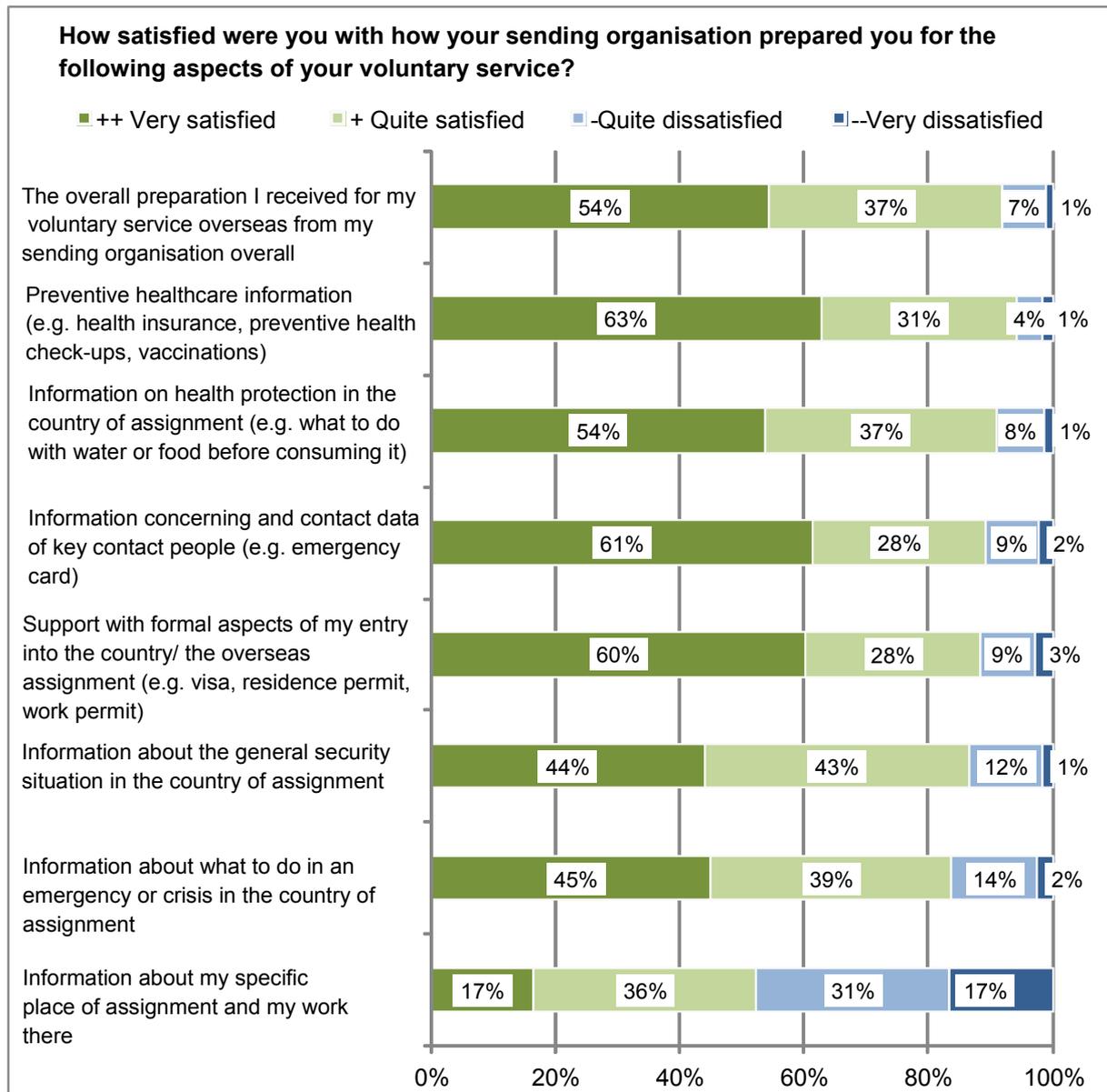


Figure 5: Volunteers' satisfaction with aspects of how they were prepared for their voluntary service

Almost all of the respondents had helped promote the work of the voluntary service before they left for their international assignment. In most cases, this took the form of them drawing their friends' and families' attention to the voluntary service, their place of assignment, host country or development issues (88%). Roughly one quarter informed the general public about the voluntary service and another 5% about development issues, by, for example, giving presentations. Many volunteers also got involved before their departure by helping set up a fundraising group or collecting donations (79%). Most of these volunteers received support from their sending organisation, e.g. information materials or knowledge-sharing, for this purpose. Around one fifth of the volunteers reported that there was not really any such support.

Since collecting donations and helping to set up fundraising groups is not a prerequisite for selection for or participation in the weltwärts programme, the volunteers were also asked

whether their sending organisations had made the voluntary nature of these activities clear to them. Most of them felt that the voluntary nature had been conveyed clearly enough. Two thirds stated that this was completely or quite true. However, one third stated that it was not really true or not at all true that the sending organisation had made it clear that collecting donations was a voluntary activity. As the question was worded slightly differently in the 2014 volunteer survey, any comparison with the previous year's findings can only be subject to reservations. Nonetheless, it would seem that the voluntary nature of donation collections was clearer to the 2014 respondents, which indicates improved communication on the part of the sending organisations.

Assignment in the host country

The places of assignment overseas were given a positive rating overall. 85% of the volunteers were quite or very satisfied with their place of assignment (see **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.**). The level of satisfaction with places of assignment rose slightly between the 2013 and 2014 surveys. In 2013, 83% were very or quite satisfied. In a similar result to the 2013 survey, the responses in the open comments section by the volunteers who were not so satisfied with their place of assignment overall indicate that the lack of opportunities to have a say was a particular problem – these volunteers tended to want to do more work rather than less. Having too much work was less often the reason for volunteers' dissatisfaction with their place of assignment. In a few isolated cases, the volunteers' dissatisfaction was due to personal problems with their contact person or to the mentoring and support at the place of assignment being inadequate or prone to conflict.

The volunteers were particularly positive in their assessment of their personal contact with their colleagues and the way in which they were socially integrated into their place of assignment.

The opportunities for active involvement at the place of assignment were also satisfactory in the view of most volunteers. The share of volunteers who were very satisfied with these opportunities increased by 5% on the previous year. Around three quarters of the volunteers viewed their work content positively. However, almost one quarter were not particularly satisfied with their tasks and work content at the place of assignment (see Figure 6). This finding corresponds with that of the previous year.

Overall, most of the volunteers had the impression that their place of assignment/host organisation in the host country was well prepared for their assignment (72%) whilst roughly one quarter felt this was not really true or completely untrue. As such, there was no change between 2013 and 2014 in the volunteers' assessment of how well the places of assignment and host organisations were prepared for the volunteers' assignments.

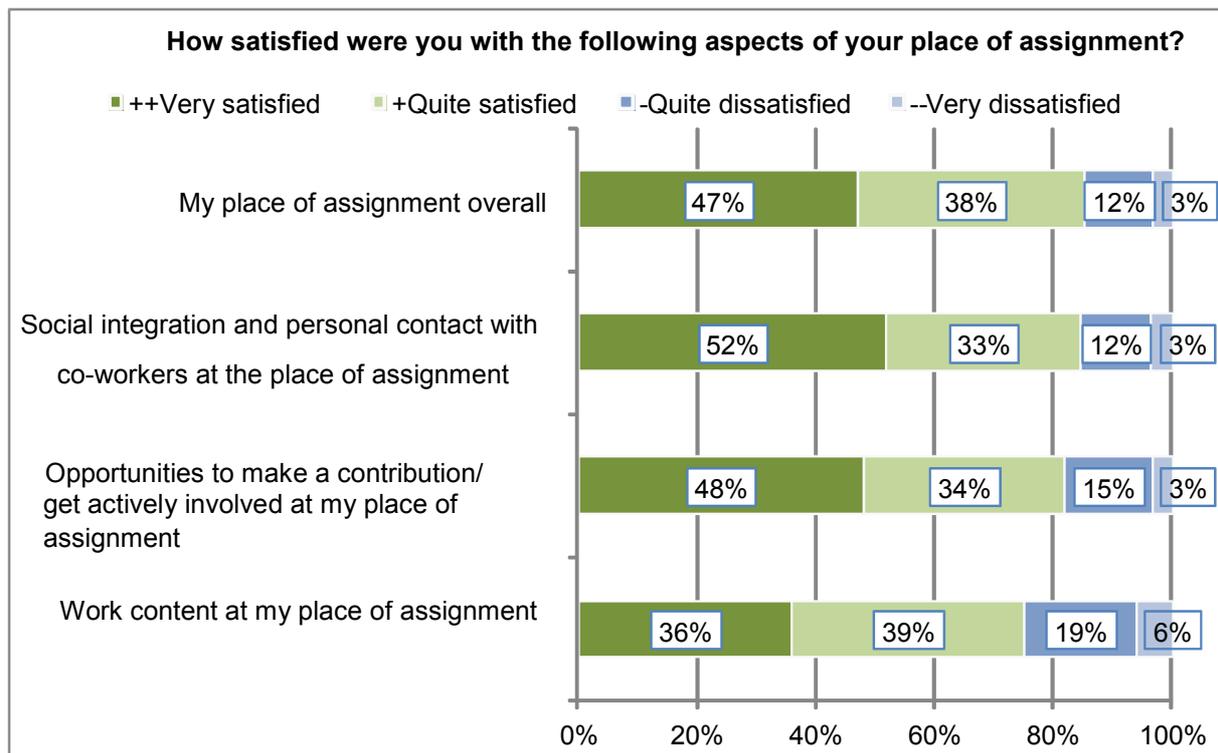


Figure 6: Volunteers' satisfaction with aspects of their place of assignment

Views regarding the introductory training and instruction given at the place of assignment varied. Roughly one third of the volunteers stated that it was completely or quite true that they had a contact person to give them instruction throughout their assignment. One third felt that this was not really or not at all true. The results were similar in relation to satisfaction with the introductory training and instruction given at the place of assignment. More than half were satisfied overall with the guidance they were given with regard to their tasks at their place of assignment (62%); over a third were quite or very dissatisfied with this aspect (see Figure 7). The most common reason for being dissatisfied with this guidance was the lack of a contact person for the volunteer either the whole time or for a relatively long period. The second most common reason was that it was difficult to reach the contact person. Personal problems with the contact persons at the place of assignment were much less often the reason for the guidance at the place of assignment not being very satisfactory.

Personal support for the volunteers during their overseas assignments, e.g. by mentors, was usually ensured. Three quarters of them had a contact person during their assignment in the host country, whom they could contact for personal support. However, one quarter stated that this was not really true or not true at all in their case. The level of satisfaction with the personal support provided was higher than the level of satisfaction with the instruction given at the place of assignment. Two in three were satisfied with the personal support; 30% were quite or very dissatisfied (see Figure 7). As with the instruction given at the place of assignment, the main reason cited for being dissatisfied with the personal support provided was that the contact person was difficult to reach or no contact person was available at all. Personal problems with contact persons were less common.

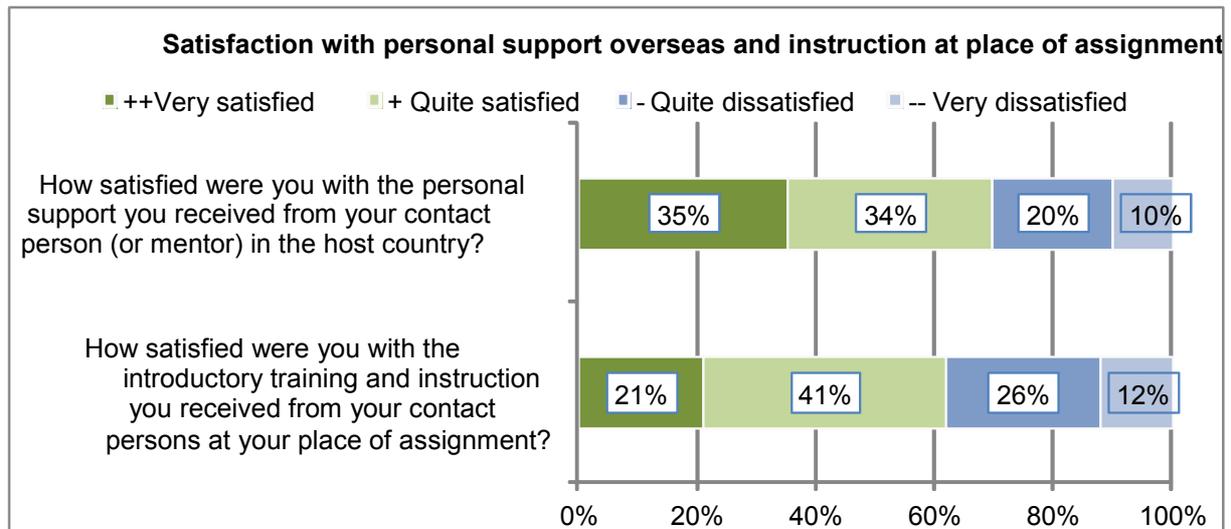


Figure 7: Satisfaction with the personal support provided during voluntary service overseas and the instruction given with regard to tasks at the place of assignment

The volunteers were very positive in their assessment of the personal contact they had with people outside their immediate working environment during their time overseas. 80% were very or quite satisfied with the level of personal contact in their country of assignment and their social integration.

Ensuring the safety and health of the volunteers during their year abroad is extremely important for the weltwärts programme. As part of the quality development process, the volunteer survey is therefore also intended to gather information on whether the volunteers are confronted with situations that they feel are potentially or very definitely hazardous or dangerous during their overseas assignment. The findings of the 2014 survey show that around half of the volunteers did not have any negative experiences at all and did not experience any situations that they considered potentially threatening (45%). As in the 2013 survey, the volunteers stated that they felt well prepared for (potentially) hazardous situations. 90% of those volunteers who were confronted with (potentially) hazardous situations stated that they felt generally in good hands – despite the possibility of security issues – due to the preparation and support provided by the host organisations in the host country and by the German sending organisations.

Roughly half of the volunteers experienced situations that they felt to be threatening or dangerous during their time overseas (47%). However, cases of volunteers being threatened personally are rare – 85% of them had not been confronted by such a situation. There were even fewer cases of volunteers experiencing physical violence (7%). In total, 14% of the respondents reported situations in which they felt sexually harassed or threatened. There were many more women (19%) than men (3%) for whom this was the case. This result is more or less the same as in the previous year and must continue to be taken seriously, especially when preparing the volunteers for their service, but it should not be interpreted as a programme-specific problem. Sexual harassment is a common form of sexualised attack or violence, which plays a role throughout society internationally. Indeed, in Germany too, the data from a representative study on violence against women indicates that nearly 60% of the

women surveyed had experienced sexual harassment⁴. The finding in the volunteer survey makes it clear that this issue also affects volunteer services (including those overseas).

Seminars

The preparatory, mid-term and returnee seminars are compulsory elements of the voluntary service. As in the 2013 survey, all of the respondents – bar a few exceptions – had attended a preparatory seminar and at least one mid-term seminar during their time overseas. Most of the 2014 returnees had already attended a returnee seminar at the time of this survey (92%). Most of those who had not yet done so were scheduled to do so on a date after the survey; there were only a few isolated cases of volunteers not having been offered a returnee seminar. This finding largely corresponds to that of the previous year.

The seminars offered by the sending and host organisations to accompany the programme were considered useful overall by the overwhelming majority of the volunteers (see Figure 8).

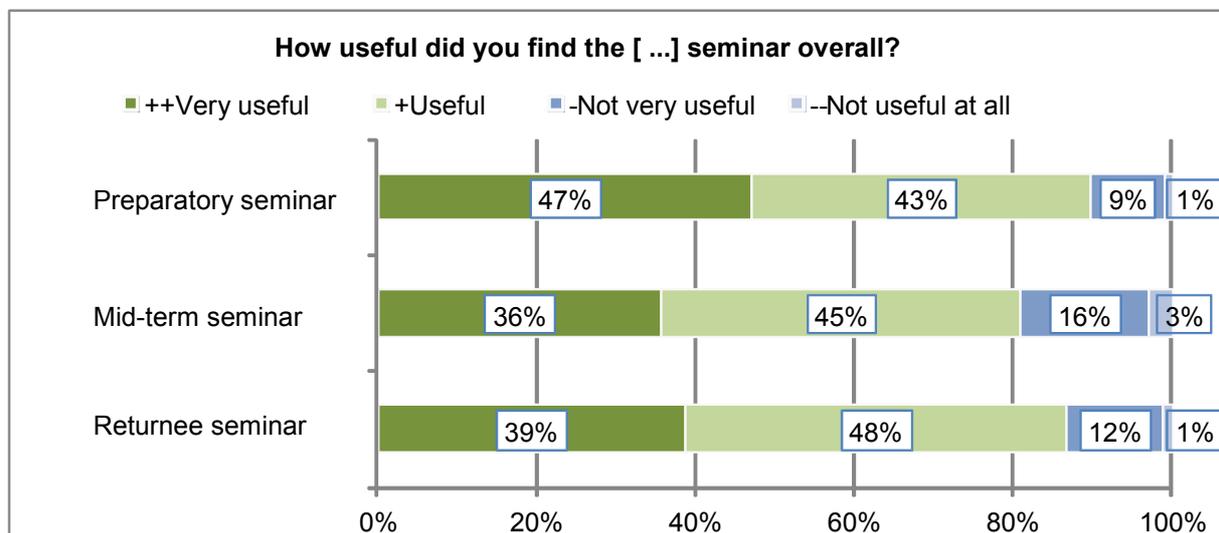


Figure 8: Assessment of the preparatory and accompanying seminars

The volunteers found the preparatory seminar particularly useful. They benefited from them and the preparation they gave in terms of working with development issues. Furthermore, more than 80% felt they were useful overall as a way of preparing for the general requirements of and their own role in the volunteer service. However, they were felt not to be quite as useful as a means of preparing for everyday life during voluntary service. The volunteers' views on the usefulness of the preparatory seminars were therefore similarly positive to those recorded in the previous year.

Even though the share of volunteers who felt that the mid-term seminars were not particularly useful overall remains higher than for the other seminar formats, there was a

⁴ Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (2005): Lebenssituation, Sicherheit und Gesundheit von Frauen in Deutschland. Eine repräsentative Untersuchung zu Gewalt gegen Frauen in Deutschland.

<http://www.bmfsfj.de/BMFSFJ/Service/publikationen.did=20560.html> [accessed on 14 July 2014].

very positive change compared to the previous year. The total share of volunteers who considered the mid-term seminar very useful increased by 5%.

In the volunteers' view, the mid-term seminars were particularly useful as a means of sharing their experiences with other volunteers (95%). Most (87%) also felt they were a useful tool for reflecting on and reviewing what they had experienced so far during their voluntary service. Here too, the share of volunteers who felt they had benefited from the mid-term seminars increased by 5% between 2013 and 2014.

In addition, most of the volunteers felt the mid-term seminars were useful in helping them deal with the challenges they faced during their overseas assignment. However, around one quarter reported that they did not particularly benefit in this way from the mid-term seminars. More than half of the volunteers (60%) felt that the mid-term seminars were useful as a way of learning more about development issues. Even though the volunteers are more cautious in their assessment of these points, a positive change can be seen compared to the previous year, with more volunteers tending to state that they had benefited in this respect from the mid-term seminars.

Returnee seminar

The overwhelming majority of the volunteers felt that the returnee seminar was useful overall (87%). In a similar result to the mid-term seminars, the opportunity to share experiences with other volunteers was seen as very positive. 97% considered the returnee seminar very or quite useful in this respect. Many returnees also saw it as a useful way of maintaining the contacts they had established and networking with other volunteers (88%). The overwhelming majority reported that the returnee seminars were very or quite useful as a way of reflecting on and reviewing their personal experiences during their overseas service (83%). Compared to the previous year's survey, slightly more volunteers stated that they had benefited from the returnee seminars in this respect. They felt that the returnee seminars provided a similar level of benefit when it came to finding out more about how to get involved in development work after they returned to Germany (83%). In addition, the majority benefited from the seminars in terms of their motivation to continue their active involvement in development work (81%).

In a similar result to the previous year, the feedback from the volunteers indicates that the returnee seminars were only of minor help in supporting volunteers in their efforts to readjust to life in Germany after their time overseas. Slightly more than half considered them useful in this respect (56%).

Satisfaction with the post-assignment activities overall was high, with 84% stating that they were very or quite satisfied (see Figure 9). Most of those who had not yet attended a returnee seminar did not comment on the post-assignment activities overall. Where they did assess their quality overall, the assessment was similarly positive to that of the volunteers who had already attended a returnee seminar.

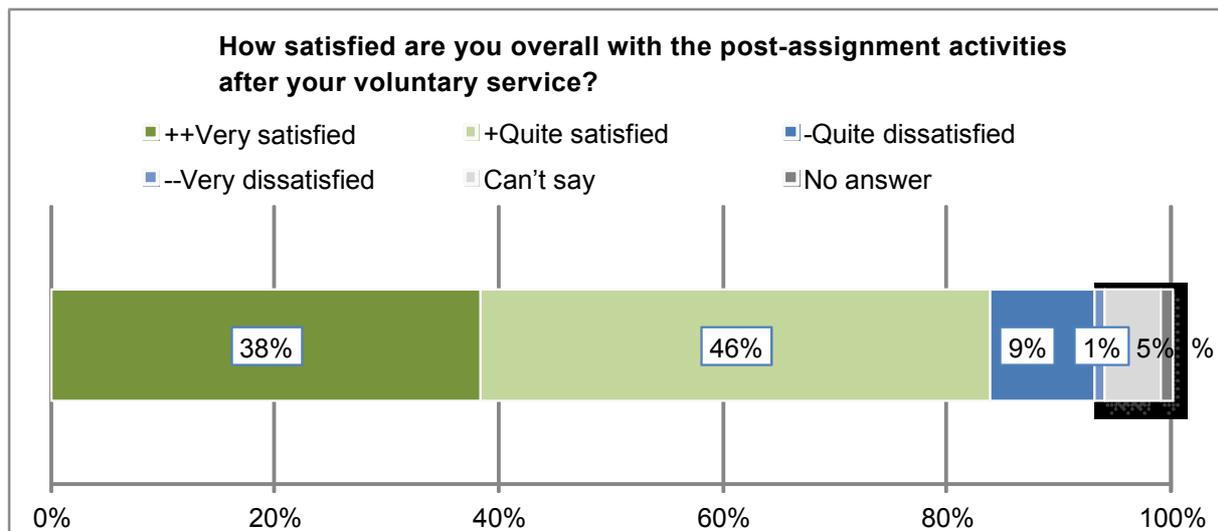


Figure 9: Satisfaction with post-assignment activities⁵

The weltwärts programme as a development learning service

In order to find out more about the effects of participation in the weltwärts programme, especially with regard to global learning, the volunteers were asked to give an assessment of how they thought their voluntary service had influenced various areas of their personal development.

The findings illustrate, as in the previous year, that voluntary service on the weltwärts programme is seen as an enriching experience and the participants benefit personally in a variety of ways. Virtually all of the respondents thought that their voluntary service had had a very or quite positive influence on their personal development overall (97%). 95% also felt voluntary service had had a positive influence overall on their openness towards other cultures and people. Furthermore, more than 90% of the volunteers felt that there had been a positive change in their ability to think and act for themselves as a result of their participation in the programme. The assignment overseas was deemed to have a similarly positive influence on their global awareness. In addition, approximately 90% saw positive influences on their interest in development issues and social or political subjects. Another 90% saw a positive effect on their motivation to assume responsibility in society.

In the respondents' view, the voluntary service did not have such a positive influence on their general career choice or their specific interest in a career in development cooperation or other development areas. Having said that, more than half of the respondents did see positive effects with regard to their general career choice and no less than half felt that their experience during voluntary service had positively influenced their specific interest in a career in development cooperation or other development areas. However, it must be pointed out that participation in the weltwärts programme can also have negative effects on volunteers' interest in a career in development, more so than in other areas (see Figure 10).

⁵ The "Can't say" answer option was only offered for volunteers who had not (yet) attended a returnee seminar.

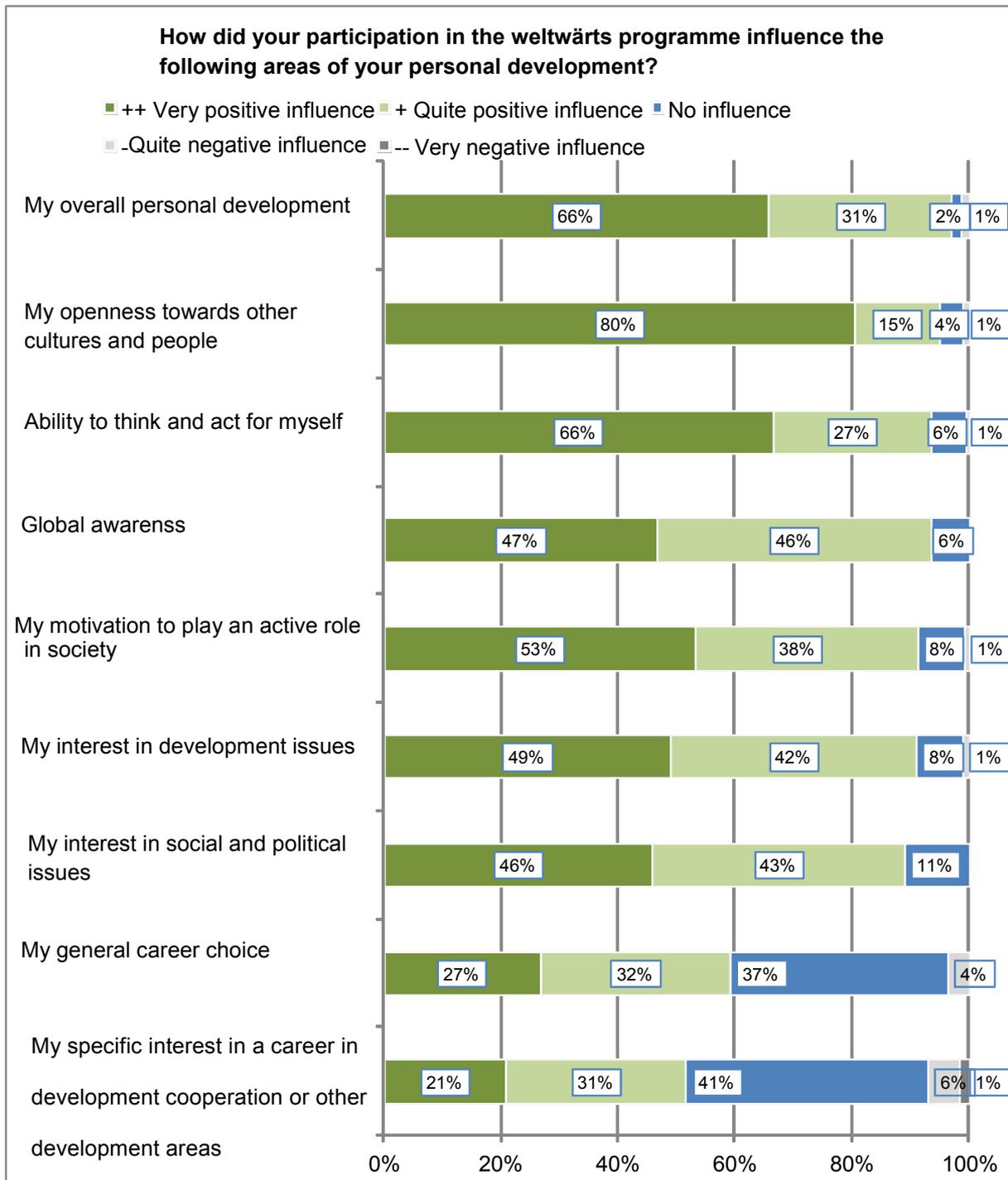


Figure 10: Assessment of how voluntary service on the weltwärts programme influenced various areas of personal development

As with the findings of the 2013 volunteer survey, the 2014 findings show that returning participants are extremely willing to engage in post-assignment voluntary work. For this question, “voluntary work” was defined as any unpaid activity for the common good – not only in the area of development. 44% of the returnees were already engaged in post-assignment volunteer work at the time of the survey. 56% were not. However, even those not currently engaged in voluntary work were extremely willing to volunteer in the future. Almost

half of them were very certain that they would engage in voluntary work in the future (27%) and another 16% felt that it was at least probable. In total then, 87% of the volunteers were either already engaged in post-assignment voluntary work or are likely to be at some time in the future. 11% were unsure about the idea of engaging in further voluntary work in the future. There were only very few returnees who said that they would (definitely) not engage in voluntary work again (see Figure 11).

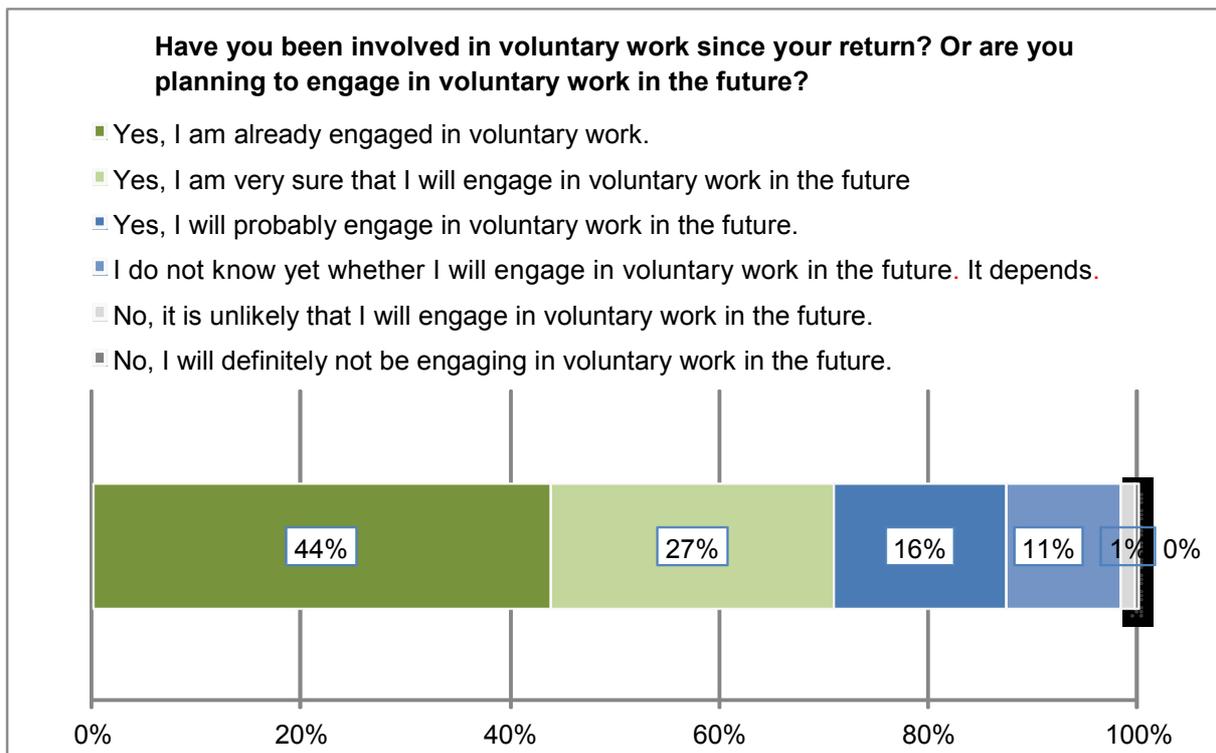


Figure 11: Post-assignment voluntary work

The fields in which returnees were already engaged in voluntary work or showed an interest in volunteering in the future are very diverse.

Most of those already engaged in post-assignment voluntary work were involved in work with children and young people (44%). This was also an area of particular interest to those who were not yet engaged in post-assignment voluntary work (48%).

Compared to the previous year's findings, the anti-racism/migration/asylum field has gained considerably in significance. One third of those already engaged in post-assignment voluntary work were working in this field. Moreover, most of those who were not yet engaged in post-assignment voluntary work were very interested in this field (61%).

More than a third of those already engaged in post-assignment voluntary work were working in the field in which their sending organisation was active. The share of (former) volunteers still working for their sending organisations increased by 7% compared to the previous year. Those who were not yet engaged in post-assignment voluntary work were also very interested in continuing to work with their sending organisation (42%). 16% of those currently engaged in voluntary work were volunteering in their host country through their own host organisation. One quarter of those not yet engaged in post-assignment voluntary work were interested in volunteering for their (former) host organisation.

19% of those already doing post-assignment volunteering were working in the area of international exchanges/relations. However, at 49%, a very large share of the respondents showed an interest in volunteering in this field in the future – much higher than in the 2013 survey.

At the time of the 2014 survey, 17% of the returnees were volunteering in development education – slightly fewer than in the previous year. However, interest in volunteering in this field in the future has remained consistently high (39%). There are also significant differences between actual volunteering activity and interest in future volunteering activity when it comes to development cooperation. 13% of the returnees had already volunteered in development cooperation; at 41%, the number of returnees who had not yet engaged in post-assignment voluntary work but could envisage working in development cooperation was very high.

There was also a great deal of interest in the human rights as a field for future voluntary work. 47% of those not yet engaged in post-assignment voluntary work felt it would be an interesting field. 13% of those already volunteering were working in this field.

In addition, more than a third of the returnees not yet engaged in voluntary work were interested in volunteering in environmental protection, conservation or climate protection. By contrast, the share of those actually engaged in post-assignment voluntary work in these areas was lower (15%).

The respondents displayed considerable interest in further information concerning post-assignment volunteering opportunities - 60% would have liked more information. The fields for which the volunteers would like more information are varied. Asylum and refugee work were mentioned several times, as was more information on volunteering opportunities directly linked to the weltwärts programme, e.g. with the sending organisations or the North-South programme. In addition, the volunteers stressed their interest in the topics of development policy and development cooperation and would have liked, among other things, more specific information about volunteering opportunities where they lived.

The returnees' interest in further training in the development field is also an indication of their generally high willingness to continue volunteering in the area of development or development cooperation. As in 2013, just under 60% of the 2014 respondents were interested in further training, e.g. training for multipliers. The share of volunteers who stated clearly that they were not interested in further training of this nature increased by 7% between 2013 and 2014.

As in the previous year, the volunteers had very diverse interests and suggestions with regard to further training. Some of them would like methodical training, e.g. for team members, seminar facilitation, mediator training or training on project management, conflict management and intercultural training. Some would also like further training on specific subjects, e.g. fair trade, sustainability, conservation and climate protection. Here too, the significance attached to the migration/asylum/refugee field was clear, with more demand voiced for further training in this field. In addition, the returnees continued to display a high level of interest in continuing to work on development issues.