Declaration on announcing 2011 as the European Year of Volunteering

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The European Parliament made a written **declaration** calling on the Commission, supported by all the institutions of the EU, to announce **2011 as the European Year of Volunteering**. It pointed out that there are more than 100 million Europeans of all ages, beliefs and nationalities who volunteer. A Eurobarometer survey published in February 2007 revealed that 3 out of 10 Europeans claim to be active in a voluntary capacity and that close to 80% of respondents feel that voluntary activities are an important part of democratic life in Europe.

The voluntary sector contributes an estimated 5% to the gross domestic product of Member States' economies, and develops innovative actions to detect, voice and respond to needs arising in society.

Members noted that the European Volunteer Centre, the European Youth Forum, the Association of Voluntary Service Organisations, the World Organisation of the Scout Movement, the Red Cross /European Union Office, volonteurope, the European Older People's Platform (AGE), Solidar, Caritas Europa, ENGAGE, Johanniter International, the European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation and others – together representing thousands of organisations involving millions of volunteers – have all called upon the institutions of the European Union to announce 2011 as the European Year of Volunteering.