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# EUROPE/PORTUGAL-Voluntary Missionary: 1,130 Portuguese around the world, many will spend their holidays in mission lands

Lisbon (Fides Service) - More than 1,130 Portuguese youth and adults will dedicate themselves this year in carrying out voluntary missionary projects in developing countries and also in Portugal, about half of them will take advantage of their summer holidays to work on this purpose. The information was sent to Fides by Fundação Evangelização and Cultures (FEC), NGO for the Development, founded in 1990 by the Portuguese Catholic Church to fight poverty and help achieve the objectives of human development and sustainable development through projects that enhance human, material and financial resources, working closely with agencies and communities. Since 2002, the FEC coordinates the Network of Voluntary Missionary which includes parishes, religious congregations, dioceses, foundations, NGOs, youth associations and informal groups of young people and adults.
Education, formation, pastoral, health, socio-cultural animation, infrastructure and agriculture construction are the areas of intervention of entities operating in developing countries of Africa, Asia and South America. The main recipients of the volunteers' action are young people, followed by children, women and teachers, without forgetting families and the elderly.
Most of the volunteers who will spend a short time out of their country is made up of students (45.9%), those taking unpaid leave (19.9%), all employees who use up their holidays to work in the mission ( 16.9%). Others are retired (4.8%), unemployed (3.9%) or are in other situations (8.6%). Regardless of the age, young adults between 18 and 30 (76.7%) are those who dedicate themselves to voluntary work more, but there are also people between 31 and 40 (12.9%), including 41 and 55 (7.3%) and over 60 (2.4%). Most of the volunteers is made up of groups linked to missionary institutes, and local communities welcome them warmly, sharing the best of themselves and their culture. Once back in Portugal, there are many volunteers who are committed to continue to support local projects of their country. (SL) (Agenzia Fides 07/22/2011)

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