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**Title**

Serving others and gaining experience : a study of university students participation in service learning  
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**Abstract**

Unlike other countries, Italy has no 'service learning', the method enabling students to join accredited voluntary organisations in order to gain experience in serving others. An investigation was conducted in 2006 and 2007 to understand the opportunity that service learning provides to young adults, community and volunteer associations. The objectives were, first, to determine whether there is a need to forge links between the university and the world of volunteer work and, second, to describe the specific areas of action in the local context. A total of 603 video-recorded interviews were conducted. The findings show that there is a need to create a network for helping institutions, neighbourhoods and young adults to assess the demand and provide an organised response for educational and community needs. As a result, starting from this year, Turin University will be operating the first service learning in Italy. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)