

SALTO-YOUTH
EASTERN EUROPE AND CAUCASUS
RESOURCE CENTRE



Education and Culture

Advanced meeting of those experienced in EVS in EECA region

16-20 November 2009, Tbilisi Georgia

Report

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16-20 November 2009, Tbilisi Georgia

Organised and financed by:

SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus (EECA) Resource Centre
Polish National Agency of the Youth in Action Programme
German National Agency of the Youth in Action Programme
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Introduction from SALTO EECA Resource Centre

SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus (EECA) Resource Centre was created in Poland by the European Commission in October 2003. The SALTO EECA Resource Centre provides **Support for Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities** for young people, youth workers, youth organisations interested in development of co-operation between Programme countries of the Youth in Action (YiA) Programme and Eastern Europe and Caucasus region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine).

Since the very beginning SALTO EECA works at increasing the quality of one of the most important pillars of Youth in Action Programme - the European Voluntary Service (EVS). Since 2003 the Resource Centre managed to organise around 10 educational activities to support EVS coordinators and mentors (www.salto-youth.net/prevactivities).

In September 2007, EVS trainers from EECA region had chance to take part in advanced Training for Trainers in Simeiz, Ukraine. Since then, those trainers together with SALTO EECA has practiced and supported over 50 common EVS trainings, organised in most of EECA countries (www.salto-youth.net/evsTCsprevious). This experience showed a big need and great outcomes of external and harmonised EVS trainings provided by SALTO EECA.

As the number of EVS volunteers sending and hosting from/in the EECA region dramatically grows, there is a huge need to introduce harmonised EVS training cycle and accreditation process. In 2009 the overall, annual number of EVS volunteers from the EECA region overcame 500, what is already a amount of the biggest UE countries. Despite this fact, volunteers are not secured with full EVS training cycle like in the Programme Countries and organisations are neither accredited nor monitored. This is a reason for many misunderstandings, confusion and sometimes problems that arise during projects' implementation.

Taking all current situation into consideration, SALTO EECA together with the European Commission struggles to introduce both the EVS training cycle and accreditation in EECA region as soon as possible. More background and SALTO EECA motivation towards supporting EVS in Eastern Europe and Caucasus here:

www.salto-youth.net/EVStrainingsEECA

This reports presents the outcomes of coordinative meeting to evaluate so far developments of common EVS trainings in EECA region and to prepare for harmonisation of the cycle and the accreditation process. Eighteen participants from EECA region (EVS trainers, project coordinators, mentors), with different level of experience, took part in the meeting giving diverse perspectives on the future harmonised system of EVS trainings and accreditation.

A Few Words from Facilitator

Over the last years, trainers and organizers of EVS projects collected a lot of experience in the field of managing International Volunteer Service in EECA region. This great potential can now be brought together to harmonise EVS training activities and the Accreditation of organizations for EVS projects to ensure and raise the quality of EVS projects in EECA region.

Our meeting was addressed to those experienced in the field of EVS: trainers as well as representatives of organisations. Harmonisation was introduced and understood as a dialogue process between EVS trainers, representatives of organisations co-ordinating EVS projects as well as hosting and sending volunteers and SALTO EECA to reach a broad consensus between all the actors in that field.

This report documents the main results of our discussion and steps towards a common approach towards EVS trainings cycle and accreditation in EECA region.

Aims, objectives, partners

Aim

- The overall aim is to further shape the EVS trainings in EECA region



Objectives:

- To reflect and evaluate our so far experiences in EVS trainings;
- To present, discuss and shape frames of cooperation for 2010 between actors involved in EVS Trainings;
- To integrate group of those experienced with EVS and prepare for closer cooperation;
- To work on harmonisation (similarities and differences) of EVS training in the region;

Partners

This activity is prepared by SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus with support from French, German and Polish National Agencies of Youth in Action Programme, as the most active National Agencies in EVS projects in EECA region.

Programme of the “Advanced meeting of those experienced in EVS” (15-20 November 2009, Tbilisi, Georgia)

	Monday 16 Nov	Tuesday 17 Nov	Wednesday 18 Nov	Thursday 19 Nov	Friday, 20 Nov
8:00-9:00		Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Departures
9:30-13:00	Arrivals Some time for sleeping and refreshment after night flights	Looking beyond our experience (I) Organising EVS training activities in Programme Countries	Looking beyond our experience (II) Contents and methodology of EVS training activities in Programme countries	Steps towards the future (Dynamic Learning Space) Open space for all issues that matter	
		EVS development for EECA regions Accreditation and training cycle	EVS training activities: towards harmonisation of our approaches Values/philosophy Aims/Objectives Contents Methodology Methods ...		
	12:30-14:00 Brunch	13:00-14:30 Lunch	13:00-14:30 Lunch	13:00-14:30 Lunch	
15:00-18:30	Getting started Some getting to know each other Expectations Programme Technical details	Going forward: towards the future of EVS in EECA Accreditation process EVS training cycle Regional EVS resource groups Structure & procedures	Continuation towards harmonisation	DLS continues	
	Experience of EVS training activities in EECA Sharing Reflecting Analysing		Competences of EVS trainers	Closure Final Evaluation	
19:00	19:30 Dinner	Dinner out	Dinner	Dinner out	
	Swine-flue prevention evening		Video / photo evening	Farewell hugs	

Focus on: INTEGRATION & SOCIALISING , EVS FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS, HARMONIZATION PROCESS MORE,

Good practise - experiences in EVS training activities

Participants were circulating between 5 flipcharts with different topics in synchronized way (10-15 min. for each flip) and with possibility to discuss and add new experiences.

Participants needs and expectations

Thinking of the specific profile of your participants: What are the needs and expectations towards EVS training activities? How did the programme and methods meet these needs and expectations?

Challenges

- Avoiding the repeating of methods and topics of PreDep
- The lack of English knowledge of participants
- Very different levels of preparation
- Difficulties to get to know needs of participants
- Challenge to be responsible for volunteer (being more than EVS trainer)
- Mixed identity: different programmes (ASF? EVS?)
- Majority of volunteers from one country
- No learning needs from volunteers :)
- Lack of harmonisation between PreDep and OnArr

Successes

- Flexible programmes
- Enough time for training according number of participants
- Communicating with the participants before the training (exploration of needs)
- Let the experienced volunteers act as resource persons during the training
- Keep in touch with the volunteers after the training
- EVS networking
- Case studies
- Fun and enjoyable

To be improved

- To raise the number of participants
- To maximise variety of participants and trainers
- Use the training as a chance to see more of the country
- More challenging experimental learning methods

Summary of the group (Most important things)

1. Flexible programme
2. Maximising variety of participants and trainers / use the training to see the country
3. Different level of preparation

Supporting learning of volunteers

How did you support volunteers in their learning during their EVS?

List of good practise

- Accommodation of volunteer in host stay family for three weeks for cultural integration
- Workshops for volunteers
- Integration meetings with locals
- "Educating" sending and hosting organisations
- Preparing mentors and host families
- Questioning: Do WE have to do this? This is responsibility of HO (mentor and supervisor) or has to be done with other training activities.
- Synergy with HO (activities of HO, information through network)
- Regularly meetings

To be improved

- Keep in connection between PreDep and OnArr
- Raising awareness about volunteers responsibilities, not only rights

How did you support volunteers in their learning during the training activity?

List of good practise

- Giving space for everybody
- Respect and promote diversity
- handouts
- Reflect their needs
- Change the training venues
- Make parallel trainings
- Place for reflection, debriefing EVS as a learning cycle, experiential cycle
- Learning to learn competence development
- Making possible to see (visit) other projects – matching needs

To be improved

- To point out for the volunteers the need and perspective of HO
- Involvement of HO in the training

Summary of the group (Recommendations)

1. Reflect volunteers training needs
2. Meetings and contact among ex-volunteers
3. Keep the connection between PreDep and OnArr (exchange of reports)
4. Making possible to see other projects
5. Preparing host families

Team-work

How did you manage working in your team?

Challenges

- Few number of volunteers
- Hard to convince to co-operate hosting organisations
- RUS did not manage
- Geographical situation (we are too far from each other)
- We as trainers have to organise training's (money, etc...)

Successes

- Multipliers supporting
- EVS trainers cooperation (team work and changes)
- annual plan EVS (UA)
- Georgian structure
- Support person
- Similar approach to a training within the trainers team (UA, GE)

To be improved

- To increase number of trainers
- Male trainers needed!
- No monopoly! (involve new organisations)
- To manage RUS network (as the Georgian one)

Summary of the group (Recommendations)

1. To divide the role of trainer and support person
2. To improve local networking
3. To make an annual plan of EVS trainings

Content and methods

Which are the most important contents in your EVS training activities? Which new methods did you use/implement?

Unsorted list

- Rights and responsibilities
- Structure of the programme
- ICL + local context
- EVS as learning experience (experimental learning cycle)
- Block about their projects
- Provide space for reflection/self-reflection, group reflection and group sharing
- Personal development / Personal project planning
- Using possibilities of unusual environment

- Study visits (sightseeing with educational elements)
- Informal integration methods
- SWOT analyses of own EVS projects
- Civil education through debates
- Artistic workshops
- Outdoor activities
- City game
- Mix of OnArr and MidTerm
- Connecting mentors
- ICL – discussing things that seem strange (positive/negative) with local and foreign volunteers
- Encouraging and supporting volunteers to develop their own projects
- Volunteer blogs
- Introducing special table for evaluation – relationships, project in general, home, etc.
- Connect volunteers from different projects – supporting networking
- Practical competences (project management, presentation for culture, EVS, methodology for working with special target group)
- Youthpass
- Crises management
- Language animation

Summary of the group (Recommendations)

1. Keep it simple and provide learning opportunities
2. EVS training is about real life and real people
3. Important things (content) relate very much to group needs

Context

In what way did the context (your organization, other organisations, SALTO, etc.) influence your EVS training activities? Which aspects were helpful? Which blocked?

Supporting aspects

- Information about EVS training cycle on SALTO's web-page
- Information letters sent from NA's about EVS trainings
- Personal and organisation authority of EVS training providers
- Database from SALTO
- Possibilities to discuss with volunteers on OnArr their projects etc, to get to know volunteers personally
- SALTO support of recognition of us as "SALTO" EVS trainers by NA's
- Additional materials/information
- Info material on SALTO website and from partners

- Volunteers are sharing information about training
- Good communication with sending organisations
- Good image of Organisation at local level

Hindering aspects

- No obligation from HO to send volunteers to EVS trainings
- No funding for PreDep and final evaluation
- No feed-back from the main stakeholders about the trainings
- No coherence between PreDep and OnArr
- Financial reporting standards/fixed regulations => centralised
- As a trainer we have time and opportunity to deliver a training but not to organise it (lack of organisation, no money, etc....)

Summary of the group (+/-)

1. VS database from SALTO to trainers (+)
2. Recognition of trainers as SALTO EECA EVS trainers network (national and international) (+)
3. No harmony (funds, logistic, feedback, reporting) (-)

Personal development

Participants were split into pairs and performed appreciative interviews with each other.

Questions:

1. *Describe briefly your best experience related to EVS training activities, when you felt most motivated and full of energy?*
2. *What are you most proud of concerning yourself during co-ordinating and carrying out EVS training activities (don't be shy!)?*
3. *Which competences (abilities, knowledge, skills) did you develop?*
4. *What are the aspects that bring "life" to your work, without them your work would lose its sense?*

Looking beyond our experience – job-shadowings at EVS trainings in Programme Countries

In 2008-2009 following EECA EVS trainers took part in job-shadowings. Reports and feedbacks can be obtained directly by e-mail.

On-arrival training

- Haykuhi Margaryan (November 2008, Germany) - haykubel@yahoo.com
- Andriy Donets (January 2009, Netherlands) - andryushkad@yahoo.com

On-arrival training and mid-term meeting

- Yaryna Borenko (October 2008 + February 2009, Austria) - yaryna@dialog.lviv.ua
- Gorgi Kakulia (February 2009, Norway) - giorgi.kakulia@apd.ge
- Anna Yeghoyan (May 2009, Poland) - ayeghoyan@yahoo.com
- Rusudan Kalichava (September 2009, Denmark) - rusudan@atinati.org

Organisation of EVS training cycle and accreditation in EECA region

During both sessions about EVS training cycle and accreditation process we used method of identifying tasks and expectations of different stakeholders and then negotiating them:

1. Identifying different actors and splitting into groups of actors
2. Defining tasks for this actor and expectations towards the other actors
3. Presentation in forum and exchanging expectations
4. Discussing the expectations in smaller groups
5. Reactions and “negotiations”

SALTO EECA	Venue	Supporter	Trainer
1. Coordination of trainings, trainers and supporters 2. Contacts with organisations 3. Official invitations and pax list 4. Finances and relations with NAs	1. Board and lodging	1. Confirmation of board and lodging 2. Purchase and delivery of materials 3. Support for volunteers' travel 4. Full financial report (including invoices for materials, hotel, trainer, etc.)	1. Content-related preparation of participants 2. To run a training 3. Short content-related report
	Both can organise an additional sightseeing tour or dinner out		

EVS training cycle

Organisations tasks

- To send volunteers to the training
- To cover travel and visa costs of volunteers (or communicate with SALTO about travel reimbursement for longer distances)
- To read reports from the trainers
- To explain volunteers that the training's are obligatory (minimum) [and/or: to motivate them for participation – comment during report-writing by Michael]
- To sign up volunteers for training (questionnaire to be filled in together with a volunteer) and special needs
- To arrange VISA and insurance
- VISA conditions

Expectations towards organisations

- To inform trainers about special needs of volunteers
- To take care about VISA issues
- To arrange transport of volunteers to the training on-time
- To apply and inform volunteers and SALTO in-time
- Co-operation and communication

Trainers tasks

- To prepare, run and evaluate training activities on high quality level
- To provide with handouts, materials related to EVS, support structure
- To provide personal consultancy
- To report
- To follow the trainers calendar
- To participate in trainers meetings

Expectations towards trainers

- Clear requirements in detail and in advance and on-going (for support persons)
- Check the standards
- Information for the organisations
- To give feed-back to HO and SO
- To create an info-letter for participants
- Professional work as EVS trainers
- Openness for self-development and learning

SALTO EECA tasks:

- to create transparent www with information about the cycle including calendar of upcoming trainings (when, where, contact to supporter, invitation)
- to create a pool of trainers (recruitment, communication, support, evaluation)
- to identify venues and supporters
- cooperation with NAs (communication, info about granted projects)
- invitations and pax list (possible on-line)
- payments & finances
- SALTO EECA officer visiting some EVS trainings
- Reports from trainings at SALTO EECA web-site

Expectations for SALTO EECA:

- to cooperate with Executive Agency
- to coordinate the whole training cycle
- to support trainers
- to make clarity if rights and responsibilities of EVS trainers
- to keep respectful partner-partner relations with trainers, not employer-worker
- to prepare clear guidelines for supporters
- to inform about trainings in advance (upcoming trainings calendar)
- to pay in time and if needed in advance
- to provide clear, honest and timely feedback

Supporters tasks:

- confirming board&lodging;
- taking care of materials and other equipment;
- consulting volunteers how to get to the venue (+part of info-pack);
- taking care of finances, collecting financial documents, checking its relevance, full financial calculation (report for SALTO EECA);
- if necessary and asked by trainers: to be in the venue during the activity;

Expectations to supporters:

- to be fast reacting;
- to cooperate with team of trainers;
- to be precise in financial issues;

Accreditation process

Organisations tasks

- Check the standards/requirements
- Provide information to hosting projects
- Training/work with hosting projects on quality standards (if needed)
- Applying for accreditation (EI)
- Accreditors visit
- YES => :)))
- NO => work on quality with hosting projects

Expectations towards organisations

- Have a good knowledge of EVS and requirements
- Send/provide all information and documents needed
- Openness for learning and improvements
- Human resources in the organisation (1 coordinator per max. 10 volunteers, 1 mentor that supports learning per max. 3-4 volunteers)

Comments

- All expectations have been accepted.

Accreditors tasks

- To meet with mentor, co-ordinator and other relevant people in the organisation
- To meet/visit the hosting projects
- To give feed-back to SALTO and/or accreditor in programme country
- To coach SO and HO
- To make assessment of hosting place for volunteer and tasks of volunteer and support available from HO

Expectations towards accreditors

- To communicate and update on regular base
- To work transparently, objectively, efficiently, supportive, timely
- Be sensitive for regional realities
- Transparency, Objectivity, Participation in accreditation workshops

Comments

- The topic of objectivity raised a longer discussion.
- All expectations have been accepted.

SALTO EECA tasks

- Information about accreditation requirements
- Provide procedures and forms for applying to get accreditation
- Accreditors recruitment
- Co-operation with accreditors
- Update of European Database of EVS accredited organisations
- Process monitoring (being in copy of emails, following the process, keeping a track on communication)

Expectations towards (remarks of discussion in brackets)

- Non-stop work during accreditation process (accreditation should not stop anyway already existing EVS projects)
- Avoiding conflict of interests through choosing accreditors
- Transparent procedure / standards / time-table
- On-going coaching (to get accreditation)
- Accreditation workshops for HO
- Multilingual
- Providing quality standards / organisation requirements
- Annual accreditors meeting
- Introduction session for multipliers
- EI should be in the same place (YiA web-page)
- To put registered/accredited organisation to the database
- Transparent information of the procedure, the standards and timetable
- Coaching during the accreditation process
- Organising workshops
- Non-stop working during the accreditation process
- To avoid the conflict of interests

Comments

- The issue of conflicting interests was longer discussed. Especially if trainers can be accreditors at the same time. It was agreed that for the future it would be ideal to separate these roles, but in the stage of implementing the new model to allow more flexibility.
- Accreditation workshops won't be offered. Information about accreditation will be provided by WWW, in the frame of other training activities, through multipliers, etc.
- Quality standards / organisation requirements will be proposed by SALTO and send to organisations and trainers for consultation
- Translations are foreseen to have on the website.
- Introduction session for multipliers will be realised at multipliers meeting.

Similarities and diversities of EVS trainings content

This part of our meeting was first attempt to see the EVS training cycle by different stakeholders (EVS trainers, project coordinators, mentors, SALTO EECA). Such diversity of perspectives resulted in interesting outcomes. Definitely the process should be continued, especially in the regional groups, when the EVS training cycle is harmonised in EECA region.

		Elements, that MUST there	Elements, that SHOULD be there	Elements, that COULD be there
Pre-departure training	Values & philosophy	Voluntarism Peoples diplomacy Non-formal learning	Self-development Life-long learning	Friendship Openness
	Aims	Inter-cultural learning Development of competences	Crisis management Conflict solving Representing own country	Improving professional skills
	Contents	YiA, EVS Rights and responsibilities Technical issues Expectations and fears	How to represent own country Project description (possibility for additional actions) Conflict management	Specificities of hosting country
	Methodology	Non-formal education Brain storming Simulations Discussions Input	Peer to peer education Ex-volunteers experience Quizzes Theory Energisers Evaluation Networking	Excursion and sightseeing
	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Very little attention to personal learning in EVS project</i>		

		Must	Should	Could
On-arrival training	Values & philosophy	Volunteerism EVS philosophy	Local and international volunteering	Local reality of volunteering
	Aims	Prepare volunteer for local reality (culture, society, practicalities) Volunteer to reflect on own in the project	To let volunteers meet and to get to know each other	To give possibility to see other parts of the country
	Contents	YiA, Inter-cultural learning Crisis management Local culture and history Personal development Rights and responsibilities		
	Methodology	Discussions	PP presentation	Forum theatre
	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Rights and responsibilities do need to be must But team-building and personal project planning definitely are must</i>		

		Must, should, could
Mid-term meeting	Values & philosophy	All experience has to be evaluated not as "good" or "bad" but as useful or useless A space for everyone to express him/herself
	Aims	To evaluate project achievements of volunteers To support the volunteer's learning process To structure the second half of EVS project
	Contents	Cultural learning and cultural integration Follow up of the project (project as a whole life of volunteers during EVS) Project's evaluation Youth pass Self development evaluation Discovering new areas Informal learning, space to personal communication Future project planning
	Methodology	The proactive approach The activities based on volunteer's experience The universal form of project's evaluation has to take place The methods connected with reality
	Notes	<i>Some fun would be also in place There are no things, which are useful or useless, everything has its sense! During midterm we try to see the sense and to get new inspirations and motivations for future. (Olenka) To prepare the volunteer to be back to sending country (re-entry shock) Professional learning too! Starting with inspirations what to do after EVS Problem and conflict solving</i>

		Must	Should, could
Final evaluation	Values & philosophy	Focus on personal and professional developments Reintegration and re-adaptation	Networking between all ex-EVS Follow-up activities of volunteers
	Aims	To reflect about changes Sharing learning outcomes Support for re-adaptation	Awareness about follow-up opportunities Motivation for networking and follow-up
	Contents	Team building To reflect how to use personal and professional learning outcomes	Connections with other ex-EVS Future planning
	Methodology	Up to needs of pax! Meetings with other ex-EVS volunteers Teambuilding Evaluation of learning Collecting outcomes of EVS projects Good and bad practices Interactive methods Celebrating together	Outdoor
	Notes	<i>Offering different reflection and evaluation methods according to different learning styles of participants</i>	

EVS training cycle as learning process	Pre-departure training	Values & philosophy	Prepare volunteer to "treat" EVS as a learning process
		Aims	Show that each thing happening during the project (all the aspects) are a process of learning Prepare future volunteers to be "open" to learn (to take and to give) To create a space to reflect of what volunteers want/need to learn
		Contents	Find out the motivation and expectations the volunteers to do EVS Link those to learning (also discuss about ways of learning if needed).
	On-arrival training	Values & philosophy	Task/project oriented (based on what volunteers already experienced)
		Aims	Goal setting for personal and "professional" development (both interconnected and based on personal needs and general social skills) linking that to the initial and "eventual" motivation and expectations
		Contents	Making the motivation and expectations more precise based on the project realities (may be making a division of expectations grouping them into knowledge, skills and attitudes) Assessment of personal learning needs, coming up with personal learning / development plan in line with some "project planning" including the expected learning outcomes and talking about the efforts/inputs of the volunteers in achieving them.
	Mid-term meeting	Methods	Action plan or letter to my-self (to be followed-up also during the MTM), Learning diary
		Values & philosophy	Person oriented (self reflection)
		Aims	Reflect/evaluate on the existing learning process/competences gained Make changes/motivate for the future learning Create opportunities for sharing of learning points/tools, or to gain new professional competences
	Final evaluation	Contents	Come back to the OAT expectations (ASK), Link the personal development to the context of the project and activities (if applicable), Look beyond the project (what will I take and what will I leave), try to formulate the competences and put them into "YouthPass wording"
		Values & philosophy	Oriented on how to apply the competences gained in the future
		Aims	Evaluate learning outcomes and incorporate this into the future life Sharing experiences
		Contents	Help to fight the fear of the future through self-reflection and/or sharing with the other ex-volunteers

Competences of EVS trainers

Group I

The most important:

- to remember that EVS is a personal choice of the volunteer
- ability to structure information
- ability to build up effective for everyone learning process

Also important:

- sensitive towards group and individual needs
- knowledge of YiA and EVS being former volunteer)
- conflict resolution and risk management
- EVS trainer is not mediator
- creating space for learning, self-reflection, questions
- inter-cultural awareness
- flexibility
- understanding and knowledge of the hosting country, culture specificities, etc.
- communication in appropriate language

Bit less important:

- presentation skills
- sense of humor
- ability to be in the shadow
- self-awareness that EVS trainer is not omniscient
- open-minded, far from judging
- open for constructive critics
- with positive approach
- communication skills (to find understanding with pax)
- time management
- active listening techniques

Group II

- ability to design and conduct interesting, engaging and interactive activity including diverse methods of non-formal education
- ability to adopt methods to the target group
- knowledge and understanding of EVS, YiA, volunteerism, inter-cultural learning, crisis management
- to be respectful, supportive, motivating, flexible, creative
- cultural sensitivity and inter-cultural awareness
- interested in self-development
- analytical and reporting skills
- ability to cope with interests of different actors
- ability to work individually and in a team

These list could still be confronted/extended by the work by Hendrik Otten and Yael Ohana (IKAB, September 2009): *The eight key competencies for lifelong learning: an appropriate framework within which to develop the competence of trainers in the field of European youth work. Or just plain politics?*. Download: www.salto-youth.net/trainercompetencestudy

Open space slots

Network of EVS volunteers in Georgia:

- database of volunteers (contacts of volunteers from EVS trainings and all others);
- coordination of EVS trainings by SALTO EECA;
- constant contact of EVS hosting organisations;

Visa problem for Caucasian volunteers:

Resolving:

- to do monitoring of embassies work concerning visa issues for EVS volunteers from Caucasus;

How:

- cooperation between SO, sharing information about volunteers' problems to get European Union visas for their EVS;
- collecting information, processing and analyse problems;
- asking SALTO EECA for support letters;

Results:

- created common strategy to make the visa procedure more easy and understandable for volunteers;
- prepared guide book;

Armenian EVS trainings planning:

PDT – December 17-19, 2009 (4 pax now)

OAT – February 1-5, 2010 (3 pax now)

MTM – January 15-25, 2010 (5 pax now), possibility to mix with Georgian group

Mentor training – December 19-20 (about 20 pax), agenda, call for pax, use own contacts, budget (possibility to get some support from multiplying budget from SALTO EECA)

Regional trainings in Caucasus:

Discussed and SALTO EECA will adapt the base document (and simulation) accordingly.

- need for prep-meeting to discuss common code of conduct and principles of fairness as well as agree on the content (this is even more important due to different possible conflict discussions between volunteers);
- common PDT might be impossible, as many volunteers need to give their passports to the consulate for many days and then they can not travel abroad;
- PDT/OAT will take place in Armenia and in Georgia (also for Azerbaijan due to little number of volunteers);
- mid-term meetings as well as final evaluations will take place commonly in Georgia;
- the scheme is developed for the first 12 months of harmonised training cycle and will be evaluated for next 12 months annually as well as we keep the flexible approach for possible changes;

- question of participants using different languages needs to be solved flexibly at each training activity;

Common trainings in Eastern Europe:

Discussed and SALTO EECA will adapt the base document (and simulation) accordingly.

- try to recalculate pre-departures, to make them RU + BY together (and mixed with Russian OAT);
- on-arrivals can be based in western Ukraine, as most of volunteers are hosted in this region (UA+BY+MD) (and mixed with UA+MD pre-departures);
- mid-terms (BY+UA+MD) can be organised either in Crimea (spring/autumn) or in Odessa (summer/winter), but venues will be allocated at later stage;
- naturally if there is enough volunteers leaving/coming Moldova, there should be possibility to organise separate training there;
- Russian hosting volunteers can not leave the country (for exceptional trainings) because of visa reason;
- Belarusian hosting volunteers can have double or multi-entry visa, so it should be no problem to go to Ukraine;
- trainer groups should be mixed: BY, UA, MD, most of trainers are from Ukraine, because most of volunteers are sent/hosted there

- if training is less than 8 participants is cancelled and volunteers moved to other one or have individual consultations with trainers out of regular system (hotel, etc)
- if trainings are between 8 and 25 participant, then 2 trainers run it, if more than 3 trainers
- if trainings are more than 31, 32 participants, then it is divided to 2 separate ones
- joint PDT and AOT means the same venue, but different programmes with some common moments;
- for PDT, OAT, MTM the organisations will cover travel costs from sending/hosting activity costs (in exceptional cases like flight from Siberia, SALTO EECA will buy the ticket), for final evaluation volunteers themselves will cover the travel costs;
- language used during the training is adopted to needs and skills of participants;

"Wish list"

Wishes to organisers, trainers and National Agencies of pre-departure training's in programme countries, who send volunteers to partner countries in EECA region (especially Poland, Germany, France)

Most volunteers who come to EECA region come from three major countries: Poland, Germany and France. Experience in hosting projects and on-arrival training's led to the following wish-list towards organisers and trainers in these countries.

Wishes towards trainers

In On-Arrival training's trainers very often have to deal with motivation problems. The wish here would be to explain and motivate volunteers better in pre-departure training's for the on-coming training activities during their stay.

A lot of EVS trainers in EECA region stress the importance of voluntary work as a contribution for the societies needs. It should be reassured in pre-departure training's that EVS as a learning service not only stresses the individual benefit (self-learning and personal development), but also the social benefits for the local community.

Furthermore the responsibilities of the volunteers for his/her activities and work should be equally pointed out than his/her rights.

Some volunteers come with the impression that hosting organisations in EECA regions use the EVS funds for themselves. They insist very much that EVS funds are "their money" and blame hosting projects for being corrupt. (This was a major problem 2-3 years ago. It became better, but is still there.)

Another, bigger issue is the attitudes towards the work of organisations. After a few weeks of staying in their hosting projects, volunteers blame their organisations for not working professionally, doing things wrong/badly, organising their work not efficiently, etc. As this is a widely shared experience in EECA countries which equally strike less and very experienced organisations as well, a preparation on Eastern-Western stereotypes behind these attitudes would be appreciated.

Wishes to trainers, organisations and National Agency

To better adopt the training it would be good to know what has been done during the pre-departure training. How could EECA EVS trainers access for example reports of the events? In return: all reports of EVS training activities are available on the SALTO web-page:

www.salto-youth.net/evsTCsprevious

Trainers from EECA countries would be happy to work in international mixed teams (trainers from programme and partner countries) to get to know the approaches better and harmonise them. This would be a step beyond job-shadowing, as it is about carrying out EVS training activities together.

Please remind organisations to include the funds for EVS training activities in the budget of the application. In several cases it was not possible to invite volunteers to EVS training's. First of all some volunteers miss the chance to have this support and it creates an unjust situation among volunteers.

Next steps

In the last moments of our meeting we had agreed to undertake following actions:

- next meeting will take place in the end of 2010 (if SALTO EECA will manage to arrange funds) or in the beginning of 2011 (hopefully in frames of already starting accreditation and harmonised EVS training cycle in EECA region);
- to create possibilities for regional trainer groups to meet and work out contents before starting the harmonised EVS trainings cycle; first trainings should include additional day for preparation;
- Armenian multipliers wants to use multiplying finances for arranging Armenian HO, SO and mentors meeting/small training;
- Michael will spread the wish-list for PL, DE and FR pre-departure regional contents among the relevant trainers;
- SALTO EECA will propose a criteria for accreditation for consultation;
- SALTO EECA will inform all participants about the Commission decision on harmonisation after December's Programme Committee;
- SALTO EECA will continue supporting EVS trainers development by offering further job-shadowings at EVS trainings in Programme Countries;
- SALTO EECA and those EVS trainers who are also involved in multipliers network will inform the network about developments during February 2010 meeting;
- SALTO EECA will send letter to organisations involved in EVS projects in/with EECA region and to the network of National Agencies about the developments in EVS training cycle;



Final evaluation

What is your opinion about organisation of the EVS training cycle?

(satisfaction level: 1 pax 50%, 13 pax around 90%)

- at least we found the agreement
- it is important to implement the full cycle (waiting for the Commission)
- I'm satisfied with results, I think that idea of regional trainings will help us to bring cooperation to higher level and make the process transparent
- there is enough clarity now
- very promising, wish to make it reality
- things are clear, hope to see system working and to contribute to it
- I want to see it working, and try out in practice
- New ideas, new plans!

What is your opinion about our work on content of the EVS training cycle?

(satisfaction level: 3 pax around 50%, 8 pax around 90%)

- helped to clarify several issues
- I see a big progress in myself and others' "content" level
- Good chance to look at the cycle as a whole
- Provided different perspectives
- For me it is still unclear about who will decide how long the trainings will be
- Some things looks one-sided for me (stress on learning vs. volunteer work)
- I expected much more, things we discussed were very basic level; we need to work it out better
- We hardly worked out anything further; we need more discussion
- I came with questions, that were answered, but now I have many new questions

What is your opinion about the organisation of the accreditation process?

(satisfaction level: 12 pax around 90%)

- nice theory, lets see it in practice
- it is cool, I'm inspired with the process, it will make the EVS more serious in our region
- it looks reasonable, interested to see how it will work
- makes sense, but we need to see it in practice
- very promising
- very European! I like the idea and I see a need to put some frames to EVS in EECA; anyway, it might put requirements that "young" organisations will be not able to fulfil
- accreditation will regulate lots of things in our "EVS" life; it is important in our Caucasian countries especially

- not all aspects are clear, but good idea
- very important process, that will improve quality and safety of EVS in EECA

How do you evaluate programme elements and methods used:

Tops:

- self-reflection and EVS trainers competences (few similar answers)
- liked work in groups during open-space
- open-space was very effective (few similar answers)
- programme was logic, it covered most of my expectations
- appropriate methods, adapted to group needs
- presentation of experiences from job-shadowings / Polish practice very interesting (few similar answers)
- meeting was more useful for me then I expected, o not I have lots of questions
- very good group feeling
- new views on on-arrival and mid-term very useful for me
- information on accreditation very useful for me

And some downs:

- programme dealt with the future, which is uncertain, but very little about how to continue the EVS trainings we run now
- all fine, but nothing new
- sometimes low group dynamic was not addressed

One in the bottom:

- presentation of experiences from job-shadowings / Polish practice

Treasure box: what was for you the most valuable in this meeting:

- I came with many questions, and now go back with all answers!
- I understood how to go on!
- Clarity + ides
- Good support from the group and SALTO EECA
- Information about accreditation
- Sense of freedom and space for experimenting
- I have clear vision and answers
- New contacts
- Inspirations and vision what and how I need to go in the future
- Informative meeting
- Interesting feedbacks from job-shadowers
- Creating of EVS community
- Shaping the training cycle in EECA, finding common understanding

Feedback to the team (Michael, Tomek, Andriy):

- adopt me ☺
- good work, positive guys
- very good
- created peaceful and nice atmosphere to work
- like you all
- very supportive and friendly, thanks a lot!
- SALTO EECA is very constructive
- Michael created sharing atmosphere
- Good team, it was visible how hard for you was the process of organising us
- Great team, thanks a lot!
- Thanks for good job. Sometimes we are hard but you managed
- Friendly team, with big patience
- Very good, both work of SALTO EECA and Michael

Feedback on hosting part:

In plus:

- great accommodation
- great to have internet
- very nice plenary
- many different working spaces

In minus:

- cold in the room
- not very special food
- no second dish for vegetarians at all
- dark in plenary after sunset

Anything more:

- swine-flu is OK, because it brought us here
- thanks Giorgi for taking care of meeting organisation
- thanks for Georgian colleagues for hospitality
- thanks to all who made this meeting possible
- this meeting should have continuation
- sorry for Michael for talking in Russian all the times

List of participants and team

No.	Name	Town, Country	Organisation	E-mail
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PARTICIPANTS

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TEAM

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3	Andriy Pavlovych	Poland	SALTO EECA	andrij.pavlovych@frse.org.pl

**Revised simulation of the EVS Trainings Cycle in EECA region in
2008/2009 (all 5 deadlines, decentralised level)**

Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova					
Venue	Deadline and training date	Kind of training	No. of possible pax by country	Total pax	Notes
Western Ukraine	After R1, end of May 08	Pre-dep	MD (2), UA (14)	All (17)	(this is pre-dep with some additional, more individual work with on-arrival vol.)
		On-arr	BY (0), MD (1), UA (0)		
Western Ukraine	After R2, end of July 08	Pre-dep	MD (5), UA (18)	All (26)	(this is pre-dep with some additional, more individual work with on-arrival vols.)
		On-arr	BY (0), MD (2), UA (1)		
Ukraine + Moldova	After R3, end of Sept. 08	Pre-dep	MD (6), UA (15)	MD (16) UA pre-dep (15) UA+BY on-arr (26)	(additional training in Moldova necessary; in Ukraine training split for pre-dep and UA+BY on-arr)
		On-arr	BY (3), MD (10), UA (23)		
Western Ukraine	After R4, end of Dec. 08	Pre-dep	MD (1), UA (4)	All (8)	(training shortened due to little number of volunteers)
		On-arr	BY (0), MD (3), UA (0)		
South Ukraine	Mid-term 1 December 08		BY (3) + MD (1) + UA (4)	All (8)	(training shortened due to little number of volunteers)
Ukraine	After R5, end of Feb. 09	Pre-dep	MD (10), UA (4)	All (28)	
		On-arr	BY (1), MD (4), UA (9)		
South Ukraine	Mid-term 2 March 09		BY (0) + MD (12) + (19)	All (31)	
South Ukraine	Mid-term 3 June 09		BY (1) + MD (5) + UA (2)	All (8)	(training shortened due to little number of volunteers)
South Ukraine	Mid-term 4 September 09		BY (0) + MD (2) + UA (7)	All (9)	(training shortened due to little number of volunteers)
Ukraine	Final evaluation		98 vols. from pre-deps		(if many from BY or MD, this can be divided)

Taking into consideration number of volunteers arriving and departing to/from Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, as well as distances between major towns and visa regulations concerning citizens of European Union, there is a need to organise annually:

- 5 on-arrivals together with pre-departures (most optimal mixture of participants), one of them shortened due to little number of volunteers;
- in September there is a need to split volunteers to separate PDT/OAT in Moldova and one PDT and one OAT in Ukraine;
- 4 mid-term trainings, two of them shortened due to little number of volunteers;
- 1 general evaluation meeting;

Russia					
Venue	Deadline and training date	Kind of training	No. of possible pax by country	Total pax	Note
Russia	After R1, end of May 08	Pre-dep	RU (2), BY (6)	All (8)	(this is only pre-dep, shortened due to little number of volunteers)
		On-arr	RU (0)		
Russia	After R2, end of July 08	Pre-dep	RU (13), BY (5)	All (21)	(this is pre-dep with some additional, more individual work with on-arrivals)
		On-arr	RU (3)		
Russia	After R3, end of Sept. 08	Pre-dep	RU (13), BY (3)	All (58)	this needs to be separated: 1 pre-dep (16) 2 on-arr (21+21)
		On-arr	RU(42)		
Russia	After R4, end of Dec. 08	Pre-dep	RU (8), BY (3)	All (11)	(this is only pre-dep)
		On-arr	RU(0)		
Russia	Mid-term 1 December 08		RU (17)	All (17)	
Russia	After R5, end of Feb. 09	Pre-dep	RU (7), BY (2)	All (22)	
		On-arr	RU (13)		
Russia	Mid-term 2 March 09		RU (26)	All (26)	
Russia	Mid-term 3 June 09		RU (9)	All (9)	(training shortened due to little number of volunteers)
Russia	Mid-term 4 September 09		RU (3)	All (3)	Canceled and pax moved to previous/ later mid-term
Russia	Final evaluation		43 vols. from pre-deps		

Taking into consideration number of volunteers arriving and departing to/from Russia, situation of Belarusian volunteers as well as distances between major towns and visa regulations concerning citizens of European Union, there is a need to organise annually:

- 5 on-arrivals together with pre-departures (most optimal mixture of participants), one of them shortened due to little number of volunteers;
- in September there is a need to split volunteers to separate PDT and two additional OAT;
- 3 mid-term trainings, while one group of volunteers is too small and should join earlier or later mid-term training;
- 1 general evaluation meeting;

Caucasus					
Venue	Deadline and training date	Kind of training	No. of pax by country	Total pax	Note
Georgia	After R1, end of May 08	Pre-dep	AZ (3) + GE (5)	All (12)	
		On-arr	AZ (1) + GE (3)		
Armenia		Pre-dep	AM (12)	All (14)	(this is pre-dep with some additional, more individual work with on-arrivals)
		On-arr	AM (2)		
Georgia	After R2, end of July 08	Pre-dep	AZ (3) + GE (9)	All (29)	
		On-arr	AZ (0) + GE (17)		
Armenia		Pre-dep	AM (23)	All (27)	(this is pre-dep with some additional, more individual work with on-arrivals)
		On-arr	AM (4)		
Georgia	After R3, end of Sept. 08	Pre-dep	AZ (4) + GE (2)	All (27)	
		On-arr	AZ (5) + GE (16)		
Armenia		Pre-dep	AM (7)	AM (9)	(training shortened due to little number of volunteers)
		On-arr	AM (2)		
Georgia	After R4, end of Dec. 08	Pre-dep	AZ (1) + GE (8)	All (12)	
		On-arr	AZ (2) + GE (1)		
Armenia		Pre-dep	AM (10)	All (11)	
		On-arr	AM (1)		
Georgia	Mid-term 1 December 08		AM (5) + AZ (2) + GE (11)	All (18)	
Georgia	After R5, end of Feb. 09	Pre-dep	AZ (11) + GE (9)	All (22)	
		On-arr	AZ (2) + GE (war)		
Armenia		Pre-dep	AM (8)	All (14)	
		On-arr	AM (6)		
Georgia	Mid-term 2 March 09		AM (2) + AZ (6) + GE (12)	All (20)	
Georgia	Mid-term 4, 5 June, Sept. 09		AM (5) + AZ (2) + GE (2)	All (9)	(training shortened due to little number of volunteers)
Georgia	Final evaluation		115 vols. from pre-deps		(if many from Armenia, this can be divided as well)

Taking into consideration number of volunteers arriving and departing to/from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, as well as distances between major towns and visa regulations concerning citizens of European Union, there is a need to organise annually:

- 5 on-arrivals together with pre-departures (most optimal mixture of participants) for Georgia and Azerbaijan together, due to little number of volunteers in AZ
- 5 on-arrivals together with pre-departures (most optimal mixture of participants) for Armenia, one of them shortened due to little number of volunteers;
- 3 mid-term trainings, one of them with volunteers from 2 deadlines due to little overall number
- 1 general evaluation meeting;

Additional comments to Simulation

Pre-departures and On-arrivals should take place at the end of 3rd month after the deadline (as the outgoing volunteers still need to organise visas and incoming volunteers are already arriving). There should be generally 5 trainings of this kind throughout the year. Mixing both kinds of training was evaluated by several EVS trainers from Programme Countries that pointed out this solution as the best one (the group dynamics, process of equal sharing, possibility to support each other...). Nevertheless only some specific sessions can be run together anyway.

Mid-term meetings should take place generally 4 times a year and be organised separately, as the volunteers are having very concrete aims for this meeting, and in general this group is the most difficult to work with during the EVS project. Mixing mid-term meeting with any other kind of EVS training makes volunteers unsatisfied as they need a lot of work to solve many difficulties that already aroused during their projects. The sharing between Mid-term volunteers and the new ones (pre-departure or on-arrival) makes the process unbalanced and difficult to secure learning for all participants.

Evaluation meetings should take place at least once a year offering a placement to all interested volunteers (many NA informs about problem with gathering the ex-EVS volunteers due to their engagements after the service period). Ideally this meeting could be organised including the representatives of sending organisations. If the Evaluation meeting will be popular, then twice a year arrangements might be done.

Pre-departure: 3 working days

On-arrival: 4 working days

Mid-term: 4 working days

Evaluation: 3 working days

If there is little number of participants, each activity can be shortened by 1 day.

In the pre-departures the question of language is important. Therefore the diversity of trainers shall be considered (see also comment below). Anyway, the Russian language is still a *lingua franca* and can be used during trainings together with English and local languages.

Due to less number of volunteers hosted in following countries, trainers from Azerbaijan and Belarus shall be more engaged in pre-departures than on-arrivals.