



Enjoy in the
EVS challenge

EVS Manual

Are you willing to experience one of the best voluntary opportunities in your life?

- Well EVS is the answer!

An EVS project is a partnership between two or more promoting organizations. These organizations are responsible for recruiting volunteers for their project. Project are usually from 2 weeks to 12 months, and as a volunteer you have a wide range of fields to choose what you best do, such as culture, youth, sports, children, cultural heritage, arts, animal welfare, environment and development cooperation.

Who is eligible?

Anyone who is between 17 – 30 years old, and is willing to leave his/her country for a certain period of time is qualified to participate.

This is how you participate:

As a volunteer in EVS, you will have a Sending Organization (SO) in the country where you live in and a Receiving Organization (RO) that receives and hosts the participant during the period of services.

What will EVS provide the participant?

All EVS participants will receive free accommodation, food, insurance and some pocket money. Travel costs might not all be paid, you might need to pay a small part of it.

At the end of your EVS period, you will receive a certificate confirming your participation and describing your project, which is the Youthpass.

Erasmus+

The Erasmus Program (European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) is a European Union student exchange program established in 1987. Erasmus+ is the new program combining all the EU's current schemes for education, training, youth and sports.



Erasmus+ (2014-2020), also called Erasmus Plus. The Erasmus+ program includes the Lifelong Learning Program (Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius, Grundtvig), Youth in Action and five international co-operation programs (Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink and the program for co-operation with industrialized countries). The Erasmus+ regulation was signed on 11 December 2013.

EVS

Going on an EVS project to another country is not a decision you should make lightly. You need to take some time to reflect, plan ahead and stay motivated.

Before committing to the European Voluntary Service (EVS), there are a few questions you should ask yourself:

What is my personal motivation?

Self-improvement, giving back to the society, improving my language skills.

Which area do I want to commit to?

Choose the field you see yourself most in, like; youth, culture, sports, children, cultural heritage, arts, animal welfare, environmental development, health and fitness, etc...

How long am I ready to commit myself for?

You are given the choice to choose from 2 weeks to 12 months.

How much time do I have?

Age range is from 17 to 30.

Benefits of participating in EVS:

- 1- Being social
- 2- Helping the local people with your skills and experiences.
- 3- Gaining experiences from the local people and learning more about their culture
- 4- Spreading your traditions by introducing your culture
- 5- Improve your English language
- 6- Learn the local language
- 7- Making new friends from different backgrounds
- 8- Improve what you want from life, making decisions about your future and what you really want to do.

Difficulties in Participating in EVS:

- 1- Culture shock
- 2- Away from family and friends – Being home sick
- 3- New language – difficulties in understanding people, and being understood
- 4- Living on a budget
- 5- Not having friends – being lonely
- 6- Getting out of your comfort zone
- 7- Technical problems – Not being able to figure out things.
- 8- Lack of support from the receiving organization



Evs project plan and quality criteria

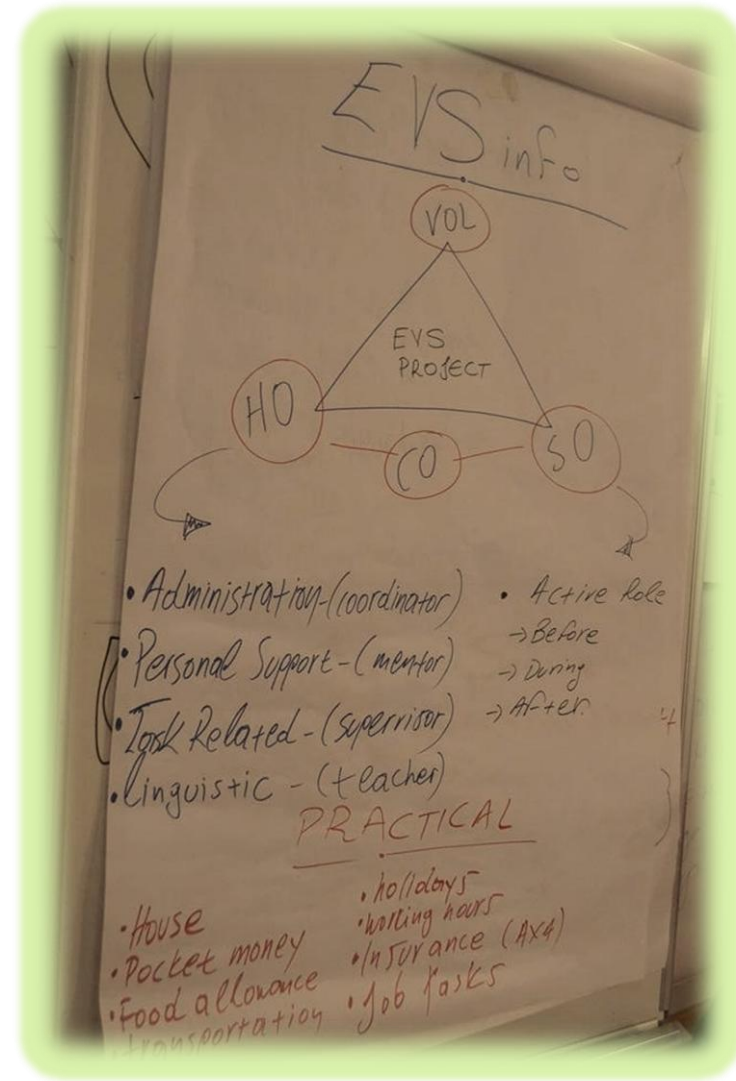
Volunteer

The volunteer has to be involved in the topic of the project. He doesn't need to have previous experience with the topic. We think it's more important that he's motivated in learning. He should be active, open-minded, energetic, easy-going and has the ability to adapt into the local community and culture and be able to face new situations. In addition, knowledge of the local language is also welcomed.

Preparation of the volunteer, role of the mentor

Preparation visit

The volunteer has a opportunity to visit the place of the project before he come. He can meet with mentor and learn how to make easy his staying – explore the city, meet the locals, transportation etc.



The mentor should provide him all equipment he needs. (computer, map of the city etc.).

Explanation of the job – schedule, responsibilities, give him some tips.

The volunteer has to have the support of the mentor anytime, it's important just to show that he's not alone and all the problems can be easily solved.

The topic

The important thing is the impact on the local community, the topic should be connected with problems and topics of the country, region, city. The results should last even after the project ending.

The topic can be about everything from the environment, teaching, restoration to the culture (music, dance, theatre).

Involvement of young people

It's important when people share a different point of view and their knowledge about the topic. Sometimes young people have the same interests and problems even when they live in different countries. After this exchange, young people can work as a group and make project and ideas to solve this problems (youth unemployment, politics, women rights, etc..)

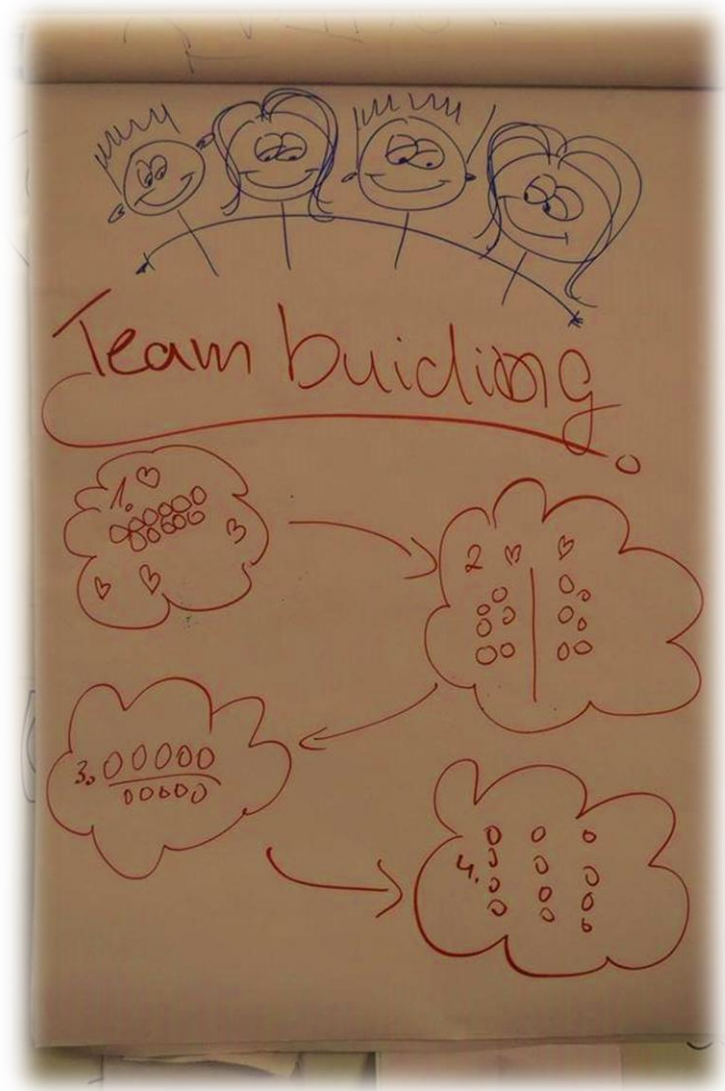
Evaluation

Let's think about if the project was successful, how to improve it and avoid mistakes for the future. Spread your ideas and results of the project to the world, invite people to the EVS, and collaborate.

What is the role of promoters in an EVS project?

Promoters involved in the EVS project perform the following roles and tasks:

1. Coordinating Organization (CO): the CO assumes the role of applicant and carries the financial and administrative responsibility for the entire project vis-à-vis the National or Executive Agency. The CO doesn't necessarily have to be an SO or HO in the project (although it may be). In EVS projects involving only one volunteer, either the SO or the HO is CO. There can be only one CO in an EVS project.
2. Sending Organization (SO): an SO recruits and sends one or more volunteers. There can be one or more SOs in an EVS project.
3. Host Organization (HO): an HO receives one or more volunteers. There can be one or more HOs in an EVS project.



Coordinating Organisation

- a. Submits the application and bears the financial and administrative responsibility for the entire project towards the National Agency or the Executive Agency
- b. coordinates the project in cooperation with all Sending and Hosting Organisations
- c. distributes the EVS grant between all Sending and Host organisations
- d. ensures that the volunteer(s) receive(s) the EVS Info Kit and attend(s) the full EVS Training and Evaluation Cycle
- e. provides support to the volunteer(s) it places in the Host Organisation(s)
- f. carries out all or some of the administrative tasks of the Sending or Host Organisation(s) involved in the project
- g. ensures, with the Sending and Host Organisations, that each volunteer is covered by the obligatory EVS group Insurance plan foreseen in the Erasmus plus programme

- h. arranges with the Sending and Host Organisations a visa for the volunteer(s) who need it. The National/Executive Agencies can issue visa support letters, if needed
- i. provides support for the learning/Youthpass process. Completes, with the Sending, Host Organisation and the volunteer, and issues, a Youthpass Certificate for those volunteers who want to receive it at the end of their EVS.



Sending Organisation

a. Preparation

- helps the volunteer(s) to find and contact a Host Organisation
- provides adequate preparation for the volunteer(s) before departure, according to the individual needs and learning opportunities of the volunteer(s) and in line with the Volunteer Training: Guidelines and Minimum Quality Standards of the European Commission
- ensures the participation of the volunteer(s) in the pre-departure session, if organised by the NA or a SALTO

b. Contact during the voluntary service

- keeps in contact with the volunteer(s) and with the Host Organisation(s) during the project.

c. Upon volunteer's return

- provides support to volunteer(s) to help reintegrate them into their home community

- gives volunteers the opportunity to exchange and share experiences and learning outcomes
- encourages the involvement of the volunteer(s) in dissemination and exploitation of results and learning outcomes
- provides guidance regarding further education, training or employment opportunities
- ensures the participation of the volunteers in the annual EVS event organised by the National Agency in their country.

Host Organisation

a. Mentor

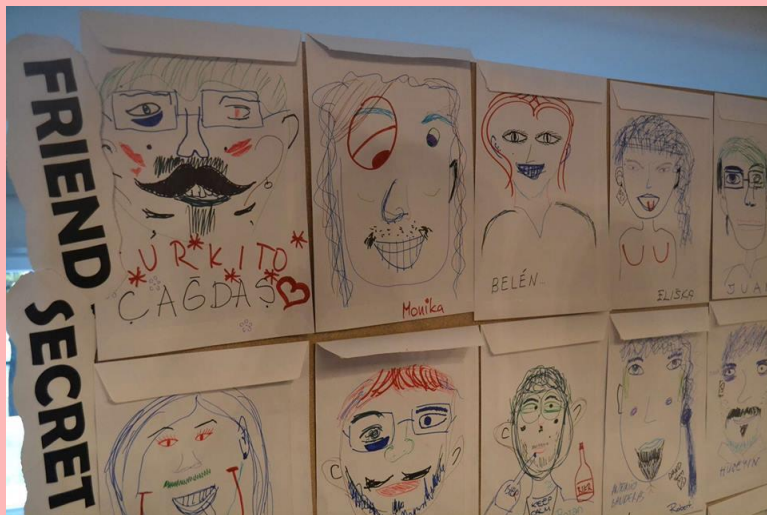
- identifies a mentor who is responsible for providing personal support and support during the learning/Youthpass process to the volunteer(s).

b. Task-related support

- offers supervision and guidance to the volunteer(s) through experienced staff.

c. Personal support

- provides personal support and support during the learning/Youthpass process to volunteer(s)



- gives the volunteer(s) the opportunity to integrate into the local community, to meet other young people, to socialise, to participate in leisure activities, etc.
- encourages contact with other EVS volunteers whenever possible.

d. EVS Training and Evaluation cycle and language support

- ensures the participation of the volunteer(s) in the on-arrival training and mid-term evaluation
- arranges language learning opportunities.

e. Principles of the Service

- ensuring universal accessibility to EVS: Host Organisations cannot specify that volunteer(s) should be of a specific ethnic group, religion, sexual orientation, political opinion, etc.; neither can they require qualifications or a certain educational level in order to select the volunteer(s)

- offering to the volunteer(s) the opportunity to carry out a well-defined set of tasks, allowing some of the volunteer's ideas, creativity and experience to be integrated
- identifying clear learning opportunities for the volunteer(s).



f. Accommodation and food

- providing suitable accommodation and meals (or a food allowance, covering also the holiday period) to the volunteer(s).

g. Local transport

- ensuring that means of local transport are available for the volunteer(s).

h. Allowance

- giving the due allowance to the volunteer(s) on a weekly or monthly basis

Who is the mentor?

A mentor is a person outside of the organization that provides the support for the EVS volunteer and helps him to easily adapt into his new environment. The mentor facilitates the whole EVS experience, but mainly the free time activities of the volunteer.

Mentors can help the volunteers providing them with experience and perspective, they should also give them information and the general view of the organization they are going to volunteer for.

One of the main roles and responsibilities the mentor has is to help with the creation of goals and aspirations. The mentor needs to provide the right tools for the personal growth and development of the skills of the volunteer.

In the matter of integration in their new environment, the mentor's role is to show the volunteer all the "tips and tricks"

of living in a new country that only local people know and that will help the volunteer to manage money, free time activities and how to overcome cultural differences.



Roles and responsibilities of a mentor

Counseling/guidance: Helping the volunteer to fit in the new community while providing all necessary keys to smooth the integration.

Confidentiality: A mentor should establish a friendly relationship with the volunteer in order to help him or her with their personal difficulties and possible problems. This should be done without passing the problems to anyone else. A volunteer should be able to rely on the mentor.

Problem solving: The mentor should have the capacity to deal with difficult situations and manage them with success in a logical thinking, stress-free and a reliable way.

Motivation/ Encouragement: The mentor gives moral boost, build self-esteem and removes the doubts of the volunteer during the EVS experience.

The mentor helps the volunteer with his integration in the new community by establishing new contacts and meet other volunteers, new people, organizations, etc.

Positive feedback: The mentor has to be a person able to provide constructive criticism. The mentor should not be judgmental and should not discourage the volunteer, he should show him the right direction of his work.

Difference between mentor and supervisor

The main difference between the supervisor and the mentor is in the different fields of influence they have during the EVS process. The mentor is connected to the volunteer's life outside the volunteer's work and the role of the supervisor is connected to the work of the volunteer in the hosting organization.

The supervisor is also in charge of all the paperwork and the technicalities connected to the volunteer's EVS process. He writes reports about the progress of the volunteers work.

The supervisor gives tasks to the volunteer and also has weekly meetings with the mentor's volunteer to check on the volunteer's work outcome.

In some cases, the mentor and supervisor can be the same person, but the volunteer will feel much more comfortable if they are different people, because while one of them offers him professional support, the other offers him personal support.

Qualities of good mentor

- Experienced youth worker;
- Outgoing, open minded person;
- Continuity - if the volunteer gets stuck at one point the mentor should help get back on track;
- Good organizational skills;
- Charismatic;
- People's person;
- Empathic;
- Language skills;
- Group working skills;
- Have a wide knowledge about different religions, cultures, traditions etc.
- Leadership skills;
- Previous EVS volunteer.

To sum it up, the mentor is the most important person in the volunteer EVS experience. The mentor is the person from outside the organization that provides all the necessary support that the volunteer needs in his free time after his work. Basically the mentor helps the volunteer to adapt into his new environment by offering him guidance and friendship in this new adventure.



Impact

This section represents the goals of the EVS project and the contribution that you want to make in your society and the improvement you want to bring to the volunteer's skills. This is important because you always have to have clear vision of what you want to achieve at the end of the project that you are creating. Therefore you have to target the need of the society and the changes you want to make to the local community where the project will be held and target the positive sides from the place that the volunteer can absorb from the chosen area, how you plan to achieve it and how you plan to measure it. This is actually the reason and the motivation for you why you want to make EVS project. This is the most important thing for you as a mentor because if you are not sure what you want to improve and bring the change you will not have the real need for the project. Therefore this 3 steps will help you how to find the impact and achieve your goals.

Target the impact

This part is the most important part of the project because here you have to find the needs of the youngsters and the needs of the community so you can make a contribution for further development of the society in.



The volunteers need can have wide range like, improvement of his skills, breaking the barrier between nations, receiving the positive sides from the targeted area, motivating him for further development, self-discovering, self-development, self-confidence, and preparing him for the labor market and involving him in the local society.



The other side of the impact is the impact that you want to make to the society and the changes you want to bring there therefore you have to be sure what are the needs for the chosen area

and the disadvantages that you want to improve there. The range can be social inclusion, removing the stereotypes, support education system and fill the gaps that it has, make the local people more open and interested to cooperate with people from different cultures.

So when you have this clear in mind it will be easy to write the project, implement it and create some changes in the people's lives in general. In this part have to be clear before writing the project so it will be a motive for you to bring a change on the both sides because when you have this already set in your mind it will be easy for you to continue with the process of creating the EVS project and implementing it later.

When you are setting the goals and targeting the need of the affected sides you have to be sure that they are realistic and achievable so in the following process of creating the activities you will be sure that you have clear tasks that you want to fulfill with them.

Achieve the impact

The impact is the mirror of the aim and the process where you set the activities for achieving the goals you have set previously. The activities should be created as a need for the volunteer to feel good in the local community that he will live for his EVS stage and on the other way they have to be compatible with the culture and accepted from the local community.

It is very important to plan it in advance and to prepare for example a Welcome party in the arrival day of the volunteers, promote the project activity in the local community and let the magic start. You have to be sure that the methods and the activities that you set as tasks for the EVS volunteer will influence the achievement of the goals what you want to reach with the project. The most important thing here is to make the activities measurable so they can be ready for the next step.

Another good tool is to create the presentation of the survival guide in the local community and the habits of the local people so the volunteer can be informed about the situations that he

might get into and also this will help him to fulfill his tasks. So every activity and task that the volunteer has to be in favor of the given goals and the impact that you have targeted in the previous section.



The point in here is that you have to make the activities compatible with the needs and the goals of the project that are actually the motive for doing the project.

Measure the impact

When you create the tasks and the activities for the project you have to be sure that the goals you set previously are measurable and realistic and they the activities you created are compatible with them, so when you start to implement the plan for achieving the impact you can measure the achievement in stages so you can be sure that everything is going according to the plan and if there are some unexpected influences or feedbacks you can modify and improve the activities plan.

So when you start with implementing the activities you always have to have in mind the progress that the volunteer makes in the project. Also with the constant feedback you will be sure that everything is going according to the plan and you are giving value from your project to the local community and to the volunteer.



DISCLAIMER

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CREDENTIALS

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Erasmus+



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