

GET INVOLVED



getinvolved!

Discover the benefits of the EVS Short Term programme for YOUR young people

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>> Introduction

EVS Short Term is a non-formal intercultural learning experience specifically aimed at young people with little or no experience in travelling abroad. Although the EVS programme has been running since the year 2000, the participation of young people experiencing certain difficulties (for example, the disabled, young people from immigrant backgrounds, early-school leavers, or those from isolated or economically depressed regions) remains very low. Youth workers who work with these youngsters may not be used to participating in international activities themselves. They admit to being confused and "puzzled" by EVS; they think it is "only for students" and do not easily see how it relates to the needs of the young people they work with.



To encourage more organisations to become involved, the Polish National Agency organised the "EVS Short Term Puzzled Training Course" in November, 2002. The course participants stated that there is a real need for more active promotion of the EVS Short Term programme across Europe. Youth workers and youth leaders need user-friendly information about EVS Short Term and the life-changing experience it can offer to their young people. But just promoting the programme is not enough. Youth workers need to understand how EVS Short Term can be used as a tool to help their young people reach long-term goals.

"Get Involved!" was written in response to these needs. Designed for youth workers and youth leaders, this document provides a general outline of the EVS Short Term programme. It includes an introduction to the aims, the target group and to the roles of each partner in a Short Term project. "Get Involved!" describes the potential benefits of EVS Short Term for young people and for youth organisations as well. In addition, this document describes how youth workers can approach EVS Short Term and how an international-level project can positively affect their work with young people on local level.

Reading the "Get Involved" guide is an important first step into EVS Short Term projects. If you have questions or want to find out more, the next step is to contact your National Agency (see the section called "Further Information" at the end of the document). If you know of other youth organisations or youth workers who might be interested in EVS Short Term, please pass a copy of this document on to them

There's no time like the present... so what are you waiting for?

Get started! <<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<

Get involved!!

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PART I – Description of the Programme

>> What is “EVS”?



EVS stands for European Voluntary Service. EVS offers young people the opportunity to take part in a non-formal intercultural learning experience in another country. In an EVS project, volunteering is the method whereby young people learn new skills while they contribute their time and effort to support local projects and local communities. The European Voluntary Service programme gives young people the chance to travel and live abroad from 6 to 12 months in order to learn about new cultures and different ways of living. This unique learning experience is designed to benefit young people by

developing their social integration and improving their employability. EVS aims to help young people actively build and take responsibility for their own future. At the same time, the programme encourages them to become better citizens in order to benefit society as a whole.

European Voluntary Service is one part of the European YOUTH programme. As its name indicates, EVS is linked to the world of international voluntary activities. However, EVS is different from other forms of voluntary work in that it is first and foremost an educational programme. Some forms of international voluntary service require candidates to have a high level of education and highly specialised skills. Others require participants to pay a high registration fee and to pay their own travel and accommodation costs. European Voluntary Service is unique because it is open to all young people and no special skills or qualifications are required. In addition, participation in EVS is completely free of charge.

>>Tell us more!

When my colleagues and I first heard about the EVS programme, we wanted to know more. We are a small youth club located in an economically depressed area. Unemployment in our region is high and our young people could never afford the luxury of travelling abroad. We wanted to hear more about the idea that our youngsters, many of whom left school at 14-15 years of age, would have a chance to learn in an environment totally different from the traditional school system. We also liked the fact that the programme aimed to invest in local projects and not only give the young people a cheap holiday.”



At the heart of an EVS project is a two-sided learning process. For the young person, this process takes place in a country other than where they live. Through voluntary activities, an individual can gain a wide range of practical and social skills. By living in the local community, young people are able to learn firsthand about foreign cultures and different styles of living. For the local community, the intercultural learning process takes place in their own backyard. By hosting a volunteer from abroad, the community can learn about the young person's home country, their habits, their customs, and how they live day to day. At the same time, the community directly benefits from the extra energy and support provided by these volunteers. Young people wanting to take part in EVS must be between 18 and 25 years of age (some exceptions may apply). They must also be legal residents in an eligible YOUTH Programme country or in an eligible third country (refer to the User's Guide of the YOUTH programme – the website is listed under "Further Information" at the end of this document).

>> What is "EVS Short Term"?

EVS Short Term (or "EVS ST") is a specialised branch of European Voluntary Service. The name "Short Term" comes from the short duration of the projects which last from a minimum of 3 weeks to a maximum of 6 months. EVS ST is distinct because it is specifically aimed at those young people who would not normally take part in international activities. In the past, the majority of EVS participants shared a standard profile; most were students with previous travel experience and high levels of practical and language skills. EVS Short Term was designed to encourage young people from different backgrounds and with very different skill levels to participate in international projects. EVS Short Term is aimed at a specific target group called "young people with fewer opportunities."

>>Timing is everything...

"My youth club is based in a large city. We work with many youngsters from immigrant backgrounds. My colleagues and I first spoke to our young people about EVS several years ago, but we met with a lot of resistance. Our young people were intimidated by the thought of going abroad for an entire year. Some of our youngsters have never even been out of their neighbourhood, so such long periods of time away were unimaginable for them. The introduction of EVS Short Term was a positive change. The young people are much more open to the idea of doing a 6- or 8-week project. For our young people, these periods of time are long enough to be a real challenge, but short enough to be realistic."



>> Who are “young people with fewer opportunities”?

>> Does “fewer opportunities” mean “problem case”?

“When we decided to host an EVS Short Term volunteer from abroad, a lot of people thought we were crazy. Some were afraid that a person from this target group would be difficult to manage and would bring problems into our small town. We didn’t share this concern. Our organisation is made up of youth workers with many years of experience. We deal with our own young people and their issues every day, so taking a young person from abroad is, to some extent, not so different from the work we are doing right now. We are working closely with our partner organisation to get to know our volunteer before they arrive. We need to be sure that we can provide the support they need. If someone has “fewer opportunities”, it does not mean they are a “problem case”. It means that host organisations have to clarify the individual’s needs in advance and decide if they have the knowledge and skill required to provide the necessary support.

The term “fewer opportunities” is very broad; it includes young people from many different backgrounds. In the context of EVS, the term “fewer opportunities” is used to describe youth who are typically excluded from participating in traditional European exchange programmes.

This exclusion may be the result of different factors. For example, some of the youngsters may live in isolated regions or in economically disadvantaged areas where they have limited access to information. Young people with a physical or mental disability may have specific needs which may not easily be provided for in foreign countries. Some youngsters from immigrant cultures may not be familiar with the concept of volunteering. Others, like early-school leavers, or those with emotional or social problems, may not have the maturity or social skills necessary to cope with living on their own far from family and friends.

Each of these groups has their own specific needs, but the one characteristic they share in common is that they are unlikely to take part in European-level programmes without some form of additional support.



>> What are the benefits of EVS Short Term?

EVS Short Term offers a variety of potential benefits. Specifically, it can help young people to:

- ✚ learn about other cultures
- ✚ gain self-esteem and confidence
- ✚ improve practical and social skills
- ✚ do something they can take pride in
- ✚ contribute to the local community
- ✚ travel
- ✚ meet new people
- ✚ become more independent
- ✚ take on responsibility
- ✚ help others
- ✚ feel needed
- ✚ learn a new language

Of course, young people are not the only ones who can gain from EVS Short Term. There are a wide range of benefits for participating organisations as well.

BENEFITS OF SENDING A YOUNG PERSON

- ✚ offering a new activity, new challenges
- ✚ facilitating contacts between cultures
- ✚ promoting volunteering
- ✚ making contacts with new organisations
- ✚ being active on European level
- ✚ learning other approaches to youth work
- ✚ seeing the young people's development

BENEFITS OF HOSTING A YOUNG PERSON

- ✚ investing in a young person's future
- ✚ bringing new energy to the organisation
- ✚ creating a dynamic of youth helping youth
- ✚ breathing new life into the local community
- ✚ gaining inspiration from the experience
- ✚ promoting learning by doing
- ✚ having fun and enjoying the experience

As indicated earlier, it must be kept in mind that EVS Short Term is a period of voluntary service. An EVS ST project can provide young people with an opportunity to gain new practical skills but it does not focus on an individual's professional development. It is important not to confuse the EVS Short Term programme with vocational training. EVS Short Term is a unique form of non-formal education which emphasizes the development of the participants' "soft" skills, attitudes and personal growth.





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>>The best decision we ever made!

When we were looking to host our first volunteer, we were contacted by an organisation who wanted to send a young man in a wheelchair for a Short Term project. Our first reaction was "We can't do it! It's too difficult!" However, after many discussions and a lot of reflection, we decided to give it a try. It turned out to be the best decision we ever made. We had to face a lot of practical problems, but it was definitely worthwhile. At first we thought that our young people could learn a lot from a foreign volunteer. We were not prepared for the learning that took place on all levels – members of our staff, even people in the local community were hugely affected by our volunteer. We were doubly fortunate – we learned not only about a different national culture, but also about the difficulties that the disabled have to face every day. The fact that this young man faced so many obstacles and yet he chose to travel abroad to help total strangers made a very deep impression on our young people. Now they have learned not to fear people who are different. Hosting a volunteer can be an incredible learning experience for everyone involved.

>> What are the limitations?

An EVS Short Term project can be a unique and valuable experience for a young person as well as for an organisation. However, the programme does have its limitations and there are some things that EVS can't do.

EVS SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH TOURISM. When young people are not familiar with international activities, or with voluntary work, it is easy for them to see EVS as a cheap vacation abroad. Therefore it is extremely important for young people to understand that EVS Short Term is a means to help them achieve their personal learning objectives. The learning aspect should be the focus of the exchange at all times.

EVS IS NOT A VOCATIONAL PROGRAMME. Although a strong emphasis is placed on the learning dimension, EVS is a non-formal learning experience. As such, a Short Term project cannot be used to extend or substitute for a formal vocational training



programme taking place in the volunteer's home country. EVS cannot be used in place of a practicum, nor can it substitute for military service. It is normal for young people to want to find a project abroad where they can apply their skills, but special care must be taken to ensure that the learning dimension and the social component of the Short Term programme remain in balance.

EVS IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR CHEAP LABOUR. A volunteer must not compete with the local labour force, nor should they be asked to carry out tasks which would normally be done by paid professionals. When defining work activities for a volunteer, it is important to remember that although the young person is meant to contribute to the host project and to the local community, their own learning experience is just as important. The interests of the host project and the young person must always be in balance.

EVS IS NOT A SOLUTION FOR EVERY PROBLEM. While the EVS experience can help young people learn new skills, it can also be a good method for helping them move away from difficult personal situations at home. For some volunteers, an EVS experience can provide distance, a temporary "breathing space", to help them look at their own situation in a new light. However, every EVS project comes to an end and the home situation does not go away. Therefore EVS should not be used as a means of escaping from serious issues. If the volunteer faces difficult personal or family problems, both the Sending and Hosting Organisations should work with the volunteer to monitor the situation before, during, and after the exchange and provide appropriate advice and guidance as necessary.

>> What is the best way to approach EVS Short Term?


For some young people, living abroad in a new culture can be an exciting challenge. For others, it can be a de-stabilizing and confusing experience. Because of this, youth workers should not approach the programme lightly. EVS Short Term should not be used as a "stop-gap solution" or as a "last resort"; a young person should never be sent on an EVS ST project "just to keep them busy". Such approaches are of little value.

When an organisation considers taking part in EVS Short Term, it is important to remember:

EVS is not a goal in itself.

It is a tool to help young people reach their long-term goals.





Past experience has shown that EVS Short Term is most effective when it compliments the work being done with young people on local level. Young people with fewer opportunities may be more open to the idea of EVS Short Term if they understand how the programme responds to their needs and how it can help them reach specific goals. The EVS Short Term programme should be seen as a vehicle for positive change; it should be regarded as a tool which can stimulate a learning process that is already in motion on local level.

To visualize this concept, imagine a young person walking along a pathway. At the end of the pathway are the individual's specific long-term goals (for example, to finish school, to find a job, to beat an addiction, to learn to live independently, to break away from bad influences, etc.) The youth worker's task is to help their young person take steps along the pathway which will teach them the skills they need to reach those goals. EVS Short Term can be one of these steps. EVS Short Term should fit inside the larger learning process – it is a method which moves the young person forward in a positive direction along their pathway.



Here are two examples of how this concept can be put into practice.

>>Example #1

A project called "The Ark" is helping John, who is long-term unemployed, to find work. John has tried a variety of jobs but is invariably fired after only one or two weeks. He consistently arrives late and sometimes does not even bother to show up. The process of job-finding is not working because John lacks the self-discipline to work. John decides to take part in an EVS Short Term project in a centre for severely physically disabled adults. His activities involve caring for the residents which includes helping them to dress, to wash, and to eat. John realises that the well-being of the residents depends on him. If he sleeps late, the residents will go hungry. On the practical side, John is learning skills to care for disabled adults, but more importantly he is learning responsibility and discipline. These skills will improve his chances for finding and keeping a job when he returns home.

>>Example #2

Fatima lives in a poor rural area. She dreams of becoming a nurse. However, her family has a low income and none of them has formal qualifications higher than a basic school certificate. Fatima has never lived apart from her family and is frightened by the idea of leaving to study in the city which is 500 km away. Fatima finds an EVS Short Term project in a busy youth centre based in a large city. She is one of a team of volunteers who develop and carry out free-time activities with the local children every day after school. On the practical side, Fatima can gain valuable experience in working with children and learning how to plan and implement different activities. More importantly, this particular project provides a protected environment where she can begin to adapt to city life. She can learn how to function on her own outside of her family. The project is helping Fatima to build up the self-confidence she will need to

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Both of these examples show how EVS Short Term compliments the local-level learning process. Through the project abroad, an individual can develop the skills and attitudes they need to enable them to take their next steps along their pathway. The learning goals of the EVS ST project respond directly to the needs identified on local level.

As can be seen in the examples, an EVS ST experience is not a direct solution to specific problems. It should rather be seen as a way to "spark" or to "kick-start" a young person to take responsibility for their own choices and to take control of their own future.

While EVS Short Term can be a valuable step along the learning pathway, it should be kept in mind that voluntary service abroad may not always be the most appropriate step for each individual. For example, **young people in crisis or who face extreme difficulties may be hurt more than helped by a period abroad.**



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PART II

– Blueprint of an EVS Short Term exchange

>> The General Framework

EVS Short Term provides an opportunity for young people to take part in an intercultural non-formal learning experience on European level. A young person travels to another European country for a specific period of time, from a minimum of 3 weeks to a maximum of 6 months. While abroad, the young person acts as a volunteer and takes part in a variety of daily activities. These activities are designed to help the volunteer learn social and practical skills but they also respond to needs identified within the local community. The volunteer's daily activities may be in the social field (for example, working with children, youth, or the elderly), in the field of arts and culture, the environment, cultural heritage, or sports and leisure.



The volunteer's activities must follow the general principles of the EVS programme. The activities should have a strong learning dimension, and should be agreed by all partners in the exchange. They should also bring an added value to the local community. The activities must be non-profit making and unpaid, and they should never substitute for tasks normally done by paid employees.

>> The Partners and their Roles

There are three partners who cooperate closely in an EVS Short Term exchange:

- ▶ A volunteer
- ▶ A Sending Organisation
- ▶ A Hosting Organisation

The volunteer is a young person aged between 18 and 25 years and is a legal resident in one of the eligible participating countries. The volunteer offers their time and effort to a local project in exchange for the chance to learn or practice skills and take part in an intercultural experience. The volunteer does not need to have any special skills or qualifications to take part in EVS Short Term, nor are they required to contribute to the costs of the exchange.

To take part in EVS Short Term, a volunteer must have the support of a Sending Organisation. This is an organisation in the volunteer's home country. The Sending Organisation should be well-acquainted with the background and needs of their volunteer. Any type of non-governmental organisation, association, local authority or other non-profit-making local initiative can be a sending organisation. In some countries, sending organisations must be approved by their National Agency before they can take part in Short Term exchanges.

EVS Short Term projects are carried out on a one-to-one basis. This means that a volunteer goes from one country to another. When the volunteer goes abroad, they are received by a **Hosting Organisation**. The Hosting Organisation offers the young person a framework in which to do their voluntary service. Any type of non-governmental organisation, association, local authority or non-profit-making initiative can apply to be a Host Organisation. All Host Organisations must be approved by their National Agency before they can receive volunteers from abroad.

All three partners work together to define the volunteer's daily activities before the exchange begins. The Sending Organisation should work closely together with the volunteer to determine their learning objectives, their interests and to identify their specific needs. Next, the Hosting Organisation works together with the other two partners to define appropriate activities for the volunteer based on what they can realistically offer. The final choice of activities needs to strike a balance between the volunteer's learning needs and the needs of the hosting community.

>>Partnership has three sides.

Our organisation, BJD, has participated in several EVS Short Term projects. We've noticed that a project gives far better results when the three partners work to develop the project together. EVS Short Term is an exercise in teamwork. It is impossible to work in isolation from your partner abroad. The volunteer has a role to play in this process as well. We don't want to provide our volunteer with a finished product - we don't want them to just consume. It is crucial that the volunteer be involved in preparing their own project as much as possible. To do this, we work with them to define their learning goals. Through us, the volunteer can communicate with their Host and the three of us work together to set up a programme of activities to reach those goals. Of course, working in cooperation takes more effort and moves more slowly than if you were to do it all yourself. But when the three partners work together, the project belongs to everyone. All three partners share the responsibility for a successful outco-

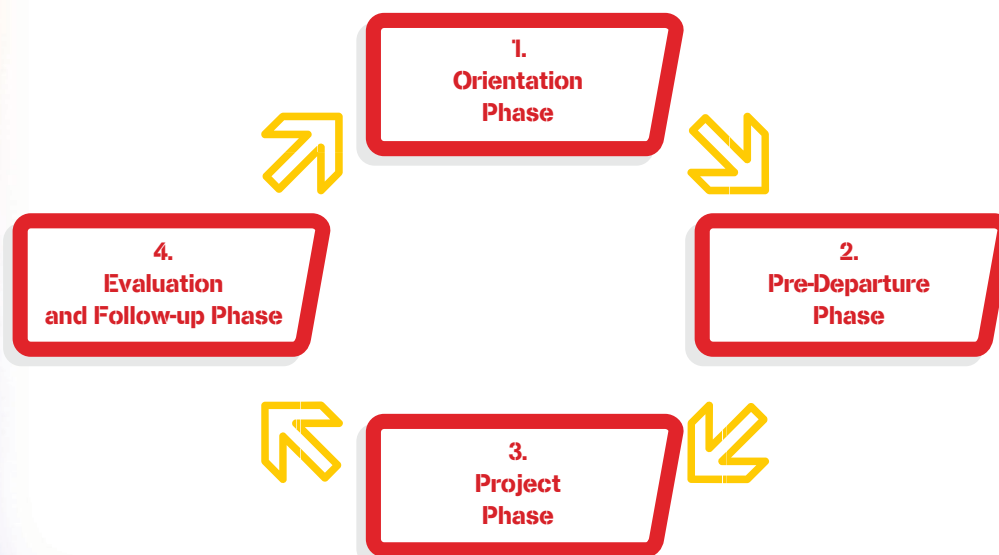


TAKE PART

An organisation taking part in EVS Short Term for the first time may wonder which role is most suitable for them: Hosting or Sending. The choice depends on many factors. Some organisations prefer to send their young people as a first step, in order to become familiar with the programme before taking on full-time responsibility for a youngster from abroad. However, other organisations take the opposite view and choose to host before sending their own young people abroad. This approach has the advantage of exposing their own local youngsters to "a foreigner", and introducing them to the concept of volunteering before taking the step of going abroad themselves.

>> The Project Cycle

There are four distinct phases involved in the cycle of an EVS project. The steps followed in this cycle are common to all organisations, whether they see themselves as Sending or Hosting.



>> What is involved in each phase?

1. Orientation Phase:



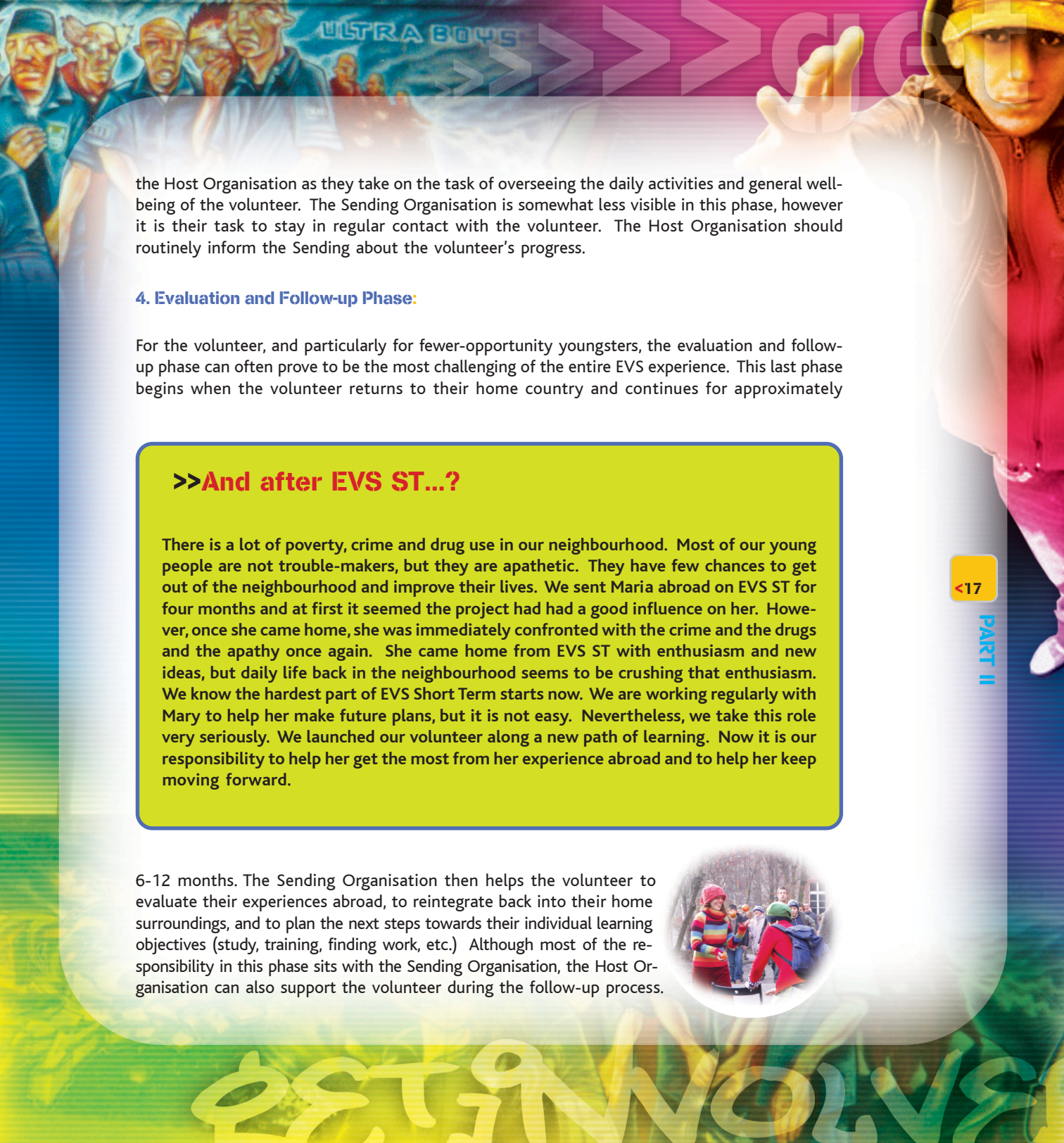
The orientation phase involves gathering information so that an organisation can learn all about the possibilities offered by the EVS Short Term programme. Each organisation must become acquainted with the administrative and technical aspects of the programme and determine what this may imply in terms of workload and long-term benefits. The National Agency can be a valuable partner in the orientation process – they can answer many questions and can link new organisations to those with previous experience. EVS Short Term projects require organisations to commit their energy and resources over a relatively long period of time, so the orientation phase is extremely important. At the end of this phase, the organisation needs to decide whether or not to take the next step – namely, actually taking part in Short Term exchange projects.

2. Pre-Departure Phase:

The second step in the cycle begins once an organisation feels they have all the necessary information and commits to setting up an EVS Short Term project. In this phase, there are many aspects which must be planned and prepared including setting up a partnership, selecting a young person, defining activities for the volunteer, submitting application forms, and preparing all the technical aspects of the exchange (travel, food/accommodation, visa, insurance, etc.) In general, the pre-departure phase requires the Host Organisation to prepare the activities and the Sending Organisation to prepare the volunteer. However, tasks may overlap between the two organisations and they will be required to work together to resolve many issues. Past experience has shown that the pre-departure phase can last from 4-12 months; in some cases, more time may be needed.

3. Project Phase:

The project phase begins when the volunteer starts travelling to their new host project and ends when they return home. In an EVS Short Term exchange, this phase lasts from a minimum of 3 weeks to a maximum of 6 months. During the project phase, the bulk of responsibility shifts to



the Host Organisation as they take on the task of overseeing the daily activities and general well-being of the volunteer. The Sending Organisation is somewhat less visible in this phase, however it is their task to stay in regular contact with the volunteer. The Host Organisation should routinely inform the Sending about the volunteer's progress.

4. Evaluation and Follow-up Phase:

For the volunteer, and particularly for fewer-opportunity youngsters, the evaluation and follow-up phase can often prove to be the most challenging of the entire EVS experience. This last phase begins when the volunteer returns to their home country and continues for approximately

>>And after EVS ST...?

There is a lot of poverty, crime and drug use in our neighbourhood. Most of our young people are not trouble-makers, but they are apathetic. They have few chances to get out of the neighbourhood and improve their lives. We sent Maria abroad on EVS ST for four months and at first it seemed the project had had a good influence on her. However, once she came home, she was immediately confronted with the crime and the drugs and the apathy once again. She came home from EVS ST with enthusiasm and new ideas, but daily life back in the neighbourhood seems to be crushing that enthusiasm. We know the hardest part of EVS Short Term starts now. We are working regularly with Mary to help her make future plans, but it is not easy. Nevertheless, we take this role very seriously. We launched our volunteer along a new path of learning. Now it is our responsibility to help her get the most from her experience abroad and to help her keep moving forward.

6-12 months. The Sending Organisation then helps the volunteer to evaluate their experiences abroad, to reintegrate back into their home surroundings, and to plan the next steps towards their individual learning objectives (study, training, finding work, etc.) Although most of the responsibility in this phase sits with the Sending Organisation, the Host Organisation can also support the volunteer during the follow-up process.



>> Key Elements in a Successful EVS Short Term Exchange

Within the EVS Short Term programme, there are a wide variety of projects all across Europe offering many different sorts of learning activities. But no matter where the project is located, or what activities are carried out, all successful EVS Short Term exchanges have several key elements in common. It is important to bear these in mind when planning future exchanges. A successful EVS Short Term exchange needs:



1. ...a solid partnership between the Sending and Hosting Organisations.

Once the Sending and Hosting Organisation agree to work together, they should both play an active role in developing and carrying out an appropriate project for the volunteer. The organisations should share a common vision of EVS ST and common aims for the exchange. The two must work together to define learning objectives and activities for the volunteer. This requires a high level of honesty and trust between the Sending and Hosting organisation.

2. ...an individualized project for the volunteer.

The EVS Short Term programme targets young people with specific needs. As such, the project in the Host Organisation needs to be custom-made to respond to the needs of that particular youngster. Bear in mind that a volunteer is not a bottle of milk – they are not all the same! Each young person has their own strengths and weaknesses, so it is important to design a project which will help them move forward and reach their specific personal goals.

3. ... a high degree of flexibility.

No one can predict what will happen in the project phase nor how a young person may react to a foreign environment. It is important to remember that no matter how much planning and preparation has been done in advance, organisations need to be as flexible as possible in order to best respond to the needs of young people from this target group during the project phase. For instance, if the daily activities are too difficult for the volunteer, simpler alternatives may need to be proposed. A young person who wants to try an independent living situation may discover that they are not yet ready for such a step. Remember that for some individuals a period abroad can be extremely unsettling, so organisations need to be open to change and ready to come up with creative solutions to problems.



4. ... support and safety for the volunteer.

Fewer-opportunity youngsters often require a high level of supervision and support, particularly at the beginning of their EVS experience. Both the Sending and Hosting must identify a Mentor within their organisations – a specific reference person who the volunteer can turn to for advice and support. As well, organisations should make every effort to ensure that the volunteer's living and working environment is as safe as possible. For example, is their living space secure? Is their accommodation in a safe area? Is there a supervisor present during the daily activities? Are there hazardous areas or equipment inside the project? Does the volunteer know what to do and who to contact in case of emergency? Etc.

5. ... support for the organisation.

An EVS ST exchange involves a lot of work; no one person can do it alone. Youth workers should try to make the best use of the resources available to them both inside and outside their organisation. Some of the tasks involved in sending or hosting a volunteer can be shared between colleagues, among other local partner organisations, and even in the local community. For instance, family and friends can help the Sending Organisation prepare the volunteer for departure (e.g. collecting information, sorting out travel documents, packing, etc.) A Host Organisation may have contacts in the community who can help overcome language barriers with the volunteer. Local young people in the project may propose activities for the volunteer's free time. There are many aspects to an EVS Short Term exchange, but it is often possible to share the responsibility and the workload.



»»»»» **get involved!**

>> Further Information

"Get Involved!" gives a general overview of the EVS Short Term programme, but it is only meant to serve as the first step in the larger orientation process. If you want to learn more about the programme, there are many additional resources available which can provide further information on EVS ST and other related topics.

The National Agency:

It is highly recommended that you contact your National Agency to find out more about EVS Short Term. They are available to answer your questions and to guide you through the technical aspects of the programme. They can often put you in contact with experienced organisations in your area. Your National Agency is also up to date on upcoming national and international training events and contact-making seminars related to EVS ST (for contact details, see "Websites" below).

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PART II

Websites:

1. www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/youth.html

This is the website of the YOUTH programme of the European Commission. Here you can find the User's Guide which provides detailed information about European Voluntary Service and the EVS Short Term programme. All the necessary application forms can be downloaded from this site. You can also find contact addresses for the National Agency in your country.

2. www.europa.eu.int/comm/youth/program/sos/index_en.html

Under the website of the YOUTH programme, you can find this special subsection called the "SOS Volunteer Helpdesk". This webpage contains a wealth of information on how to organise an EVS exchange, examples of hosting projects and testimonials from past volunteers.

3. www.salto-youth.net/inclusion

SALTO - Inclusion is one of eight Resource Centres working on European priority areas within the youth field. On this website you can find news and information on a variety of inclusion topics as well as many inclusion resources including useful publications, the SALTO newsletter, upcoming training opportunities, and a list of trainers with experience in social inclusion projects.

>> Reference and Practical Tools:

1. “Step-by-Step to Long-Term Voluntary Service”

This brochure, produced by the Step-by-Step network, gives an impression of the impact of voluntary service on young people with fewer opportunities and provides an overview of approaches developed by the network partners over a five year period.

2. “ENVOL Companion to the European Voluntary Service User’s Guide”

The ENVOL network collected the practical experience of their volunteers and projects in the “ENVOL Companion”. This guide provides some essential guidelines for quality work with young people requiring additional support before, during and after their EVS experience. This guide contains useful information for sending as well as hosting organisations.

3. Training Kits

(T-Kits) are tools designed for youth leaders and youth organisations. The T-Kit series provides information on a variety of topics related to European-level youth work and on the needs of different groups of young people. Several of the T-Kits in the series deal with issues related to implementing and managing EVS Short Term exchanges:

- T-Kit on International Voluntary Service (including EVS)
- T-Kit on Social Inclusion
- T-Kit on Project Management

These and the rest of the T-Kit series can be downloaded from www.training-youth.net



>> Acknowledgements

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PART II



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get involved



ინვოლუცია

The background features a vibrant, multi-colored gradient from orange at the top to blue at the bottom. Overlaid on this are several stylized, semi-transparent icons: a person with arms raised, a person sitting at a desk, a person with a laptop, and a person with a book. The main title 'GET INVOLVED' is written in a large, bold, white, rounded font with a slight shadow effect, positioned centrally across the middle of the page.

GET INVOLVED

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