



PREPARING THE VOLUNTEER FOR THE EVS PROJECT ABROAD Basic info-kit

In order for the project to be successful and the EVS experiences to be positive and enriching for the volunteer, it is crucial that the Sending Organisation adequately prepares the volunteer prior to departure.

This preparation should take place at least one month before departure and should be tailored to the individual needs of the volunteer and the specificities of the project, the service and the host country. Pre-departure preparation provides the volunteers with information about EVS, the project life cycle and the different parties involved. It allows volunteers to discuss their expectations, their motivation and also any concerns they may have about their future project with their Sending Organisation.

During their service period, volunteers will be living in a different country, interacting with people from a different culture and often in a foreign language. At times this will be difficult, and volunteers are likely to face various difficult situations during the service period. It is therefore essential to lay the grounds for guiding volunteers through the intercultural learning process and to tell them about the support available during their service period.

Pre-departure preparation includes providing volunteers with practical and technical information on matters such as insurance, visa, pocket money and working hours, etc.

Prior to departure, each volunteer receives an Info-Kit. The pre-departure preparation is an opportunity for the Sending Organisation to go through and discuss the different parts of the Info-Kit with the volunteer. The Coordinating Organisation is responsible for ensuring that the Info-Kit is given to all volunteers involved in its project.

The **EVS volunteer Info-kit** is composed of four documents (click on the hyperlink) which volunteers need to know:

[Welcome letter](#)

[What to expect from EVS](#)

[Information about the EVS insurance for volunteers](#)

[Information about Youthpass in EVS](#)

Old but still useful guides on the Youthpass and EVS Insurance Scheme:

[Youthpass in EVS](#)

[The European Voluntary Service Insurance Plan Volunteer's Guide](#)

Expected achievements of the preparation

The pre-departure preparation will vary according to training practices, organisational possibilities and volunteer needs. Nevertheless, pre-departure preparation should ensure that, by the time they leave, all volunteers:

- 1) know about concept of the European Voluntary Service and its place within the Erasmus+ Programme;

- 2) are familiar with the partners in the EVS framework and their role, i.e. the Sending, Receiving and Coordinating Organisation, the mentor and, where applicable, the National/Executive Agency, SALTO and the European Commission;
- 3) are familiar with the document "What to expect from EVS";
- 4) have shared their motivations, expectations and fears, and have reflected on their goals, including goals for learning;
- 5) have received appropriate practical and technical information on visas, residence permits, their legal status as a volunteer, their insurance, pocket money and the EVS Agreement;
- 6) understand the meaning of intercultural learning and are aware of the ongoing intercultural learning process;
- 7) have received guidance or at least hints on crisis management;
- 8) understand the importance and usefulness of getting a Youthpass;¹

Depending on the financial and human capacities of the Sending Organisation as well as the number of the sent volunteers the pre-departure training/preparation can take different forms. Ideally it can be a weekend residential training bringing together a group of outgoing volunteers with proper facilitators. On the other hand, if the organization is sending for example only one volunteer, the preparations will take the form of several shorter meetings between the EVS coordinator in the Sending Organisation and volunteer. It is very beneficial to include in the preparation also an EVS volunteer who is currently on the EVS project or a former EVS volunteer to be able to answer the concrete questions of the outgoing volunteers.

Suggested programme for the EVS pre-departure training

1) I am...

Who am I? Who is my sending organization? Where I am going on the EVS project, my hosting organization? What am I going to do there, which target group will I be working with?

2) I am going, because ...

Motivation, expectations, wishes, fears.

3) EVS is...

Basic presentation of Erasmus+, structure and key players in EVS, rights and responsibilities in EVS (Info-Kit)

4) My culture is ...

Meaning of the international mobility, what's in it for me, importance of the intercultural learning.

5) I solve my problems ...

Where can things go wrong in EVS? Who can help me, how?

6) I want to learn to

What do I wish to learn? How do I wish to learn it? Who can help me in this? When will I learn it? Basic presentation of the Youthpass, and the volunteer writes a letter to him/herself (and receives it after 2 months)

7) This training was...

Short evaluation of the training

¹ The above text is taken from [EVS training and evaluation cycle guidelines and minimum quality standards](#) for the Erasmus+ Programme. European Commission, January 2014