

Meeting of Erasmus+ volunteering / EVS accredited organisations of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro

Sarajevo, July 6-7, 2018

Facilitators: Dragan Atanasov, Ajša Hadžibegović

SALTO SEE representative: Andrej Troha

Contact points representatives: Mirela Kalamperović – ADP-ZID, Jasmin Jašarević and Adina Halilović – PRONI Brčko





Short summary of the activity and main outcomes

Participants had the opportunity to network and share experiences, to report on good practices and the problems and challenges faced, as well as to design potential solutions and next steps in overcoming challenges. The program was designed as meeting of colleagues allowing maximum liberty for participants to actively contribute to creation of the content. The facilitators were creating enabling environment for networking, sharing and learning using different methods: plenary discussions, individual and small groups work, short interactive presentations, video inputs, fish-bowl, world café and open space, as well as energizers as found needed.

Major blocs of the program included:

DAY I: Getting to know each other and team building; Exploring the philosophy of Volunteering Activities (EVS); Exploring own organisation's structures and culture; Quality dimensions - How to support quality partnership building and How to secure a quality support structure for Volunteering + Exploration of specific topics as suggested by participants.

DAY II: Layers of support in Volunteering projects including Living Library with EVS volunteers; Tools and resources + Exploration of specific topics as suggested by participants; Future steps; Evaluation and closing.

Main outcomes can be summarized as:

- increased information flow and understanding of the programme, particularly for new organizations;
- supported networking and development of joint plans for future;
- increased learning and found potential solutions from shared practices and discussions.

Context and background

The meeting of Erasmus+ volunteering / EVS accredited organizations of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro in 2018 was the second of its kind. Last year's meeting was a good opportunity to gather and support the organizations and explore practices. This year's meeting was organized to support the organizations and their networking process further.

The meeting gathered 21 representatives of 19 accredited organizations and organizations that are considering renewing their accreditation.



Aim and objectives

- supporting the exchange of experience and challenges faced in implementing EVS and E+ volunteering
- informing about support system offered by SALTO SEE and Contact point for Erasmus+ YIA
- support networking between organizations
- to inform organizations about the novelties in E+ for the future
- facilitating contact with SALTO SEE

Overview of participants

The group was mix of people that have direct experience with EVS and those that are completely new to the E+ programme. The group was active and was mainly engaged in activities. Several participants have not attended full meeting due to time and other obligations, but majority even though slight, has attended meeting fully.



Programme overview

Timing	Day 1	Day 2
07:00 – 10:00	Check In, Registration and Breakfast	Breakfast
Session 1 10:00 11:30	Welcome and Opening Intro to the team and group Walk and Talk – Sharing is caring!	Summary of Day 1 Layers of support in Volunteering projects
Break 11:30 - 12:00		
Session 2 12:00 13:30	Exploring the philosophy of Volunteering Activities (EVS)	Input of the existing support structures + Living library with EVS volunteers
LUNCH 13:30 - 15:00		
Session 3 15:00 16:30	Picturing my organisation as...	How to make the whole work better? Tools and resources we can use
Break 16:30 - 17:00		
Session 4 17:00 18:30	Quality dimensions How to support quality partnership building and <i>how</i> to secure a quality support structure for Volunteering	Bringing it on with the further steps Evaluation and closing
Dinner 19:00 20:00	Dinner at hotel	Dinner at hotel

Conclusions and reflections

Exploring the philosophy of Volunteering Activities (EVS)

Aim: group sharing tips for newcomers and clearing any doubts for everyone + to bring all participants at the same level of understanding of EVS

Session started with teaser video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mXD3iawNdGg> and participants were individually writing questions they would like answered about essence of what EVS is “what I always wanted to know and never dared to ask about EVS”. Small groups composed of people of different levels of experience and expertise on EVS were then responding to questions they were drawing from the Question box. 2-4 questions per groups were covered in depth and the rest were saved for next sessions.



Quality Dimension in E+Volunteering

Aim: group exploring and deepening understanding of quality dimensions in EVS

Five questions were posed and then discussed in depth through fishbowl method. All participants were given opportunity to provide their answer. Below is the account of what was discussed and shared.

1. *How to make balance when structuring volunteer's workday, so that volunteers have enough time to work on developing their own project? And how much support should be provided for them in that process?*
 - Structure of the day needs to be based on the aims and interests of volunteers and their expectations, as well as organization's and community needs and available time. The structure of working day should be revised occasionally.
 - It is important also to create daily aims and activities for volunteers.
 - It is important to have balance between volunteer's project and their activities within organization. In order to make such balance it is necessary to allow for period of learning and only after few months to start working with volunteer on developing his/her idea for own project.
 - Short-term volunteers sometimes do not want to work on own project. Coordinators can engage them as assistants on existing projects in that case.
 - In the Activity Agreement there is detailed explanation of program of activities for volunteer: planning of own project, language course, work on activities of organizations (e.g. 4hrs workshops + 2hrs preparation). Volunteer writes up monthly report and sends it to coordinator.

2. *What are experiences of partnership building with colleagues outside of Balkans? Which tools for getting in touch and establishing initial contact are most recommended by more experienced colleagues?*
 - Contact making seminar and SOHO training
 - Write up a text about your organization and send it to organizers saying that you want to participate at their event so that you could present work of your organization or organize a workshop and make contacts.
 - Trainings and conferences on SALTO portal and when SALTO is one of organizers – they are also in charge of selection based on topic and profile. However, many trainings are organized by others and can serve as bases for establishing contacts. The best is referral by friend.
 - Contact making seminar and referrals
 - Every partnership brings potential risk regardless if contact is made via internet or you have met someone in person. You need to make effort to make partnership work.



- It is not good partnership and not good experience, specially for new organizations, where one partner joins based on internet last minute call due to cancellation and then has nothing to do with development and preparation of project.
 - Capacity building allows for enough support to develop good partnerships and in combination with referrals and creation of network of organizations that can work together.
 - Contact making seminar and other promotional and capacity building activities of Contact point and on local level are important – e.g. it provides Contact point with diverse contacts for further referral.
3. *What exactly is procedure when applying for projects to be financed through E+ for partner countries?*
- SALTO doesn't grant projects but supports organizations in different ways. Organizations from BiH and MNE can be founded through E+ by: 1. applying directly to EACEA in Brussels and 2. Their partner organizations from countries with NA applying to their NA with joint project. WB window allows organizations to apply with EVS, youth exchange and capacity building of youth workers, to say simply. Application to EACEA is more complex and it's recommended that only more experienced organizations attempt it.
 - Very limited number of project gets funding eventually (example: project that didn't get funding at EACEA when submitted through partner to one NA has got funding support)
 - There are organizations that have built their reputation for years and NAs support them. There are also those that are on "black list" due to mishandling projects/funds.
4. *To what extend can SALTO SEE support accredited organizations with administrative procedures regarding EVS (e.g. visa and medical exam – volunteers are treated as foreign workers)?*
- Each individual case is different, so please inform SALTO SEE about what is the problem and SALTO will see if there is way to help. It has happened also before. However, Contact point is much more appropriate address as SALTO SEE is not really fully knowledgeable of local laws.
 - The question of treating volunteers as workers by competent state bodies is not technical but rather political issue. The accredited organizations should look into opportunities to advocate for such issues having in mind BiH's proclaimed EU path. It is systemic problem and the request for resolutions/legislation change should come from within.
 - SALTO SEE is helping sending organizations preparing their volunteers, but primarily this is the task and responsibility of SO to prepare their volunteer before sending. SALTO needs information in order to be able to respond. Also, SALTO is currently creating a



publication that will provide guidelines to HOs for obtaining visa for their hosted volunteer and at the same time is doing a survey on learning support provided by organizations to volunteers, which will provide relevant data for creation of future support plan.

- The biggest support for visa for sending volunteer needs to be at local level, due to legislation and practice, as well as experience of organizations that went through the process. If letter of support from SALTO SEE is leverage, inform SALTO and ask for it.

5. *How can we use other possibilities through Erasmus+ e.g. trainings, job shadowing etc. for organizational development?*

- First of all get really good knowledge about E+ and key actions KA1, KA2 and KA3, activities that are eligible and which partners from WB are eligible.
- In KA3 organizations from WB can be partners but really rarely only as added value to the project.
- Experience of young people from Youth Exchanges is crucial for them to make decision to do EVS.
- EACEA Call for applications from WB is only once a year, deadline 8th of March, for Capacity building projects that need to have at least one mobility activity (EVS, YE, training of youth workers). Organizations with more technical capacities for writing projects and managing and consuming greater amounts are preferred.

Layers of support in E+Volunteering

There are different kinds of support that should be provided to volunteers, both by the receiving and sending organization. Naturally, greater part of the responsibility for supporting the volunteer is on the receiving organization. The dimensions of support on the **receiving** side include, but are not limited to the following:

- Task related support: this includes all work-related support that the volunteer should receive, including adequate training for the tasks and continuous support while implementing the activities, provided by someone from the organization who is familiar with the work that the volunteer should do.
- Personal support: related to the ongoing support that should be provided to the volunteer with all personal challenges. The receiving organization should support the volunteer in preventing and overcoming all difficulties, either in their personal life or work-related.
- Intercultural learning support: this includes the support provided to the volunteer in dealing with all intercultural challenges that the volunteer might face while trying to integrate in the host culture. The volunteer should be provided with a safe space to reflect on their intercultural experience and support to use the intercultural clashes and difficulties as opportunities for learning and personal development.
- Linguistic support – volunteers have the right to free language training during service. The format, duration and frequency of the training varies according to volunteers' needs, interests and abilities, as



well as the project tasks and the structure and capacities of the receiving organization. The organizations and volunteers can also take advantage of the Online Learning Support (OLS), which is currently available in a limited number of European languages.

- Learning support – includes the ongoing support provided to the volunteer in planning and reflecting on their learning process. The volunteer should be encouraged to take responsibility of their own learning, set learning objectives and self-assess their learning outcomes. This also includes supporting the volunteer in translating the learning outcomes into the key competences of Lifelong Learning and issuing a Youthpass.

- Free time and socializing – which includes supporting the volunteer outside of work, with everything from integrating in the local community, discovering the town, meeting other young people, learning about events and taking part into leisure time activities.

The way in which all these layers of support will be provided depend on the structure and capacities of the receiving organization. The only requirement is that there are at least two different persons providing support to the volunteer – coordinator and mentor. The coordinator is mainly responsible for all the task-related support and thus it's important that this is someone from the organization. The mentor should be someone who doesn't work directly with the volunteer, either from or outside from the organization. This person is usually responsible for providing learning, personal, intercultural learning and free time and socializing support. Because of the many responsibilities a mentor usually has, organizations often decide to involve more than one person in this role. Local volunteers, organization's beneficiaries, people from other organizations and other young people can be involved in providing different layers of support. It is thus advised to receiving organizations to reflect on the human resources that are available and to find the most appropriate model that fits their reality.

The organization that is **sending** the volunteer has a role in supporting the volunteer as well – before, during and after the project. Besides helping the volunteer with organizing the traveling, obtaining visa and other logistical issues, the sending organization should also prepare the volunteer for the service (work tasks) and for the intercultural learning experience. During the project, the sending organization should remain in touch with the volunteer and provide support as needed. Upon volunteer's return home, the organization should provide them with space and support to reflect about the experience, reintegrate in their home culture, and plan their next steps.

SALTO SEE also has a role in supporting volunteers, through organizing training sessions for them. All volunteers whose projects are longer than 2 months are entitled to attending an On-Arrival Training, while the ones staying more than 6 months should also take part in a Mid-Term Evaluation Meeting. There is also an Annual Event organized for the volunteers who have returned from their projects. However, receiving organizations are responsible for organizing on-arrival trainings for volunteers whose projects are shorter than 2 months, for which SALTO SEE provides guidance and resources. Information on this

and other related topics can be found at: <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/volunteering-activities/useful-info/>

More information about the layers of support in E+ volunteering projects can be found in the Hopscotch to Quality in EVS 2.0

Tools and resources

Aim: To introduce and share tools and other resources that can be used as support when implementing E+ volunteering activities.

The facilitators and the representatives from SALTO SEE and Contact Points shared web pages and online resources that can be useful when preparing and implementing E+ volunteering projects. Participants then shared their practices, including an application form for receiving volunteers. A list of shared resources:

<https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/> - the web page of SALTO-YOUTH South-East Europe Resource Center, including information support activities, process of accreditation, contacts of Contact Points, publications and resources, and other contents

<https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/european-training-calendar/> - SALTO's platform for training events within Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme

<https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/> - toolbox with tools and materials for training activities

<https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/resources/hopscotch/> – Hopscotch to Quality in EVS 2.0 PLUS – pdf version of the Publication and a selection of resources and online materials related to E+ volunteering activities.

<https://www.youthpass.eu/en/publications/> - Youthpass web portal, including various publications and materials about learning

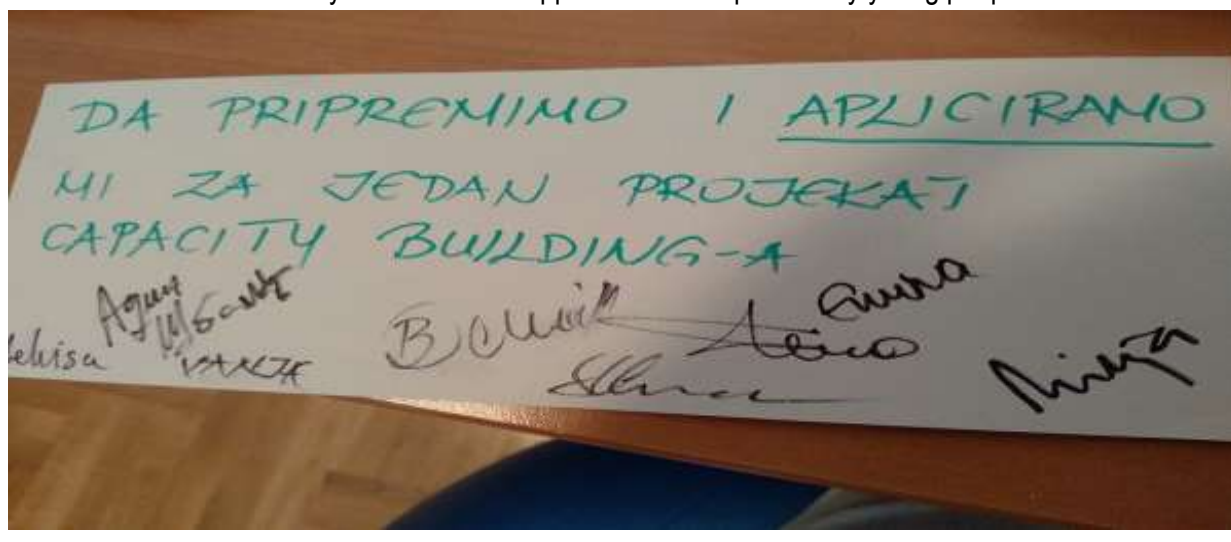
<http://erasmusladi.ba/> - web page about Erasmus+ Programme of the Contact Point PRONI Brcko

<http://www.zid.org.me/tekuci-projekti/kontakt-tacka-erasmus-youth-in-action> - web page of the Contact Point ADP-ZIP

Suggested or agreed follow up of the activity

Participants were identifying individually activities that they would take and propose to group to take as next steps. Here is the account on what was finally agreed and signed to confirm commitment ☺

- Info sessions and different promotional/capacity building activities re EVS (responsibility: ADP Zid/Contact point/Mirela)
- Improve visibility of Contact point at social networks (responsible PRONI Brčko).
- Joint activities (agreed and signed by: all present):
 - FB Group (responsible Emina);
 - Promotion of EVS at schools, faculties, etc (all);
 - Active partner search (all);
 - Organizations from MNE – joint event for promotion (responsible Mirela);
 - Fair of organizations from BiH (responsible Bakir).
- To find sending organization from Germany for Bakir (responsible: COD/Elma)
- Advocacy activities in BiH regarding administrative obstacles (agreed and signed by: all present):
 - Meeting with Ministry of Justice (responsible Vanja)
 - Meeting with KULT (responsible Dino)
 - Meeting with “Vijeće mladih” (responsible Elma)
 - Meeting with Union of High school pupils (responsible Melvisa)
- Promote EVS to local departments and offices that are important for wider community support to EVS (agreed and signed by: all present) + drafting a joint project for such promotion (responsible Bakir).
- To prepare and apply to EACEA with capacity building project with our organizations (responsible signatures on photo ☺).
- To include youth with fewer opportunities and particularly young people with disabilities.





Summary of the participants evaluations

Participants expressed high level of satisfaction with all logistical aspects of the training. Majority of the group responded with “very satisfied” regarding location, accommodation and food, working space, practical information before the meeting, group and spirit and personal involvement; while everyone else reported being fairly satisfied and satisfied.

There was also a high level of satisfaction with the work of trainers and selection of working methods, with 16 and 14 participants out of 21 reporting being very satisfied respectively.

The group also assessed that the meeting objectives were achieved greatly.

- 14 out of 21 participants reported they were “very satisfied” with achieving the objectives: Informing about support system offered by SALTO SEE and Contact Points for Erasmus+YIA; and Facilitating contact with SALTO SEE and Contact Points.
- 12 out of 21 participants reported they were “very satisfied” with achieving the objectives: Supporting the exchange of experience and challenges faced in implementing E+ volunteering/EVS projects; and To inform organizations about the novelties in Erasmus+ for the future
- 9 out of 21 participants reported they were “very satisfied” with achieving the objective: Support networking between organizations. On this objective 2 participants also reported being “less satisfied”, which was almost not present under the other objectives. For future meetings it should be explored how to provide more opportunities for networking between organizations.

Participants assessed the following sessions as the most useful: tools and resources, layers of support, experience with EVS volunteers, sharing experiences between organizations and support structures. Other sessions were mentioned as well, and general comments were given that all sessions were useful. Very few sessions were evaluated as less useful, such as the fishbowl/quality dimensions, with a comment that it was because of the timing.

When it comes to recommendations for next meetings, participants proposed to do the training in Montenegro, change the dates, and have the meeting organized by organizations experienced in EVS projects.



- List of Participants -

No	First Name	Last Name	Name of the organization
1.	Adina	Halilovic	PRONI Center for youth development
2.	Adnan	Mević	Association "Youth Volunteers"
3.	Ajša	Hadžibegović	faciltator of the meeting
4.	Aleksa	Matić	Institute for Youth and Community Development "Perpetuum Mobile"
5.	Amir	Tursunović	EKOLOŠKO UDRUŽENJE "JEZERO"
6.	Andrej	Troha	organizer, SALTO SEE
7.	Anja	Jerkovic	Youth Power/Snaga Mladih
8.	Bakir	Demir	SOS Kinderdorf International, Predstavništvo u Sarajevu
9.	Dino	Sinanović	ALD Zavidovići



10.	Dragan	Atanasov	faciltator of the meeting
11.	Eldina	Budimlić	Centar Fenix
12.	Elma	Salihagić	COD JAJCE
13.	Elmira	Redžepagić	Association of Youth with Disabilities of Montenegro
14.	Emina	Hasanagić	Foundation Krila nade/Wings of Hope
15.	Jasmin	Jasarevic	PRONI Center for youth development
16.	Jelena	Perisic	Avenir
17.	Adin	Šabić	UG "Interkulturni susreti u Bosni i Hercegovini"
18.	Melvisa	Miskic	NARKO-NE
19.	Milos	Popic	Omladinska organizacija Svitac
20.	Minja	Todorovic	Nadiskupijski centar za pastoral mladih Ivan Pavao II.
21.	Mirela	Kalamperović	ADP-Zid
22.	Nedim	Pripoljac	Centar za edukaciju mladih
23.	Slađana	Ognjanović	NGO CAZAS
24.	Svetlana	Tcholak- Antitch	Avenir centar
25.	Vanja	Sudar	UG Nešto Više & EkoDizajn llc
26.	Zivko	Lekic	Center for Children, Youth and Family Laktasi

Prepared by: Dragan Atanasov, Ajša Hadžibegović, August 2018