

VOLUNTEERING

FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION: PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion: People with disabilities

Large-Scale EVS Event: Disabled Free Fest

Erasmus+ Programme
Key Action 1: Learning Mobility of Individuals
Large-scale European Voluntary Service Events

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Editing & Design:

Svitlana Sobova

Viivi Setälä

Proofreading:

Nesibe Yavaş

Shahbaz Khan

System and Generation Association

Necatibey Caddesi No: 19/21
Çankaya, Ankara
06430, Turkey
Tel.: +90 312 23 05 341
www.systemandgeneration.eu

Didim Ve Yöresi Engelliler Derneği

1357.Street,
Efeler Mahallesi, Didim
09270, Turkey
Tel.: +90 256 813 3959
www.didimengellilerdernegi.com

CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Who can be a volunteer?	6
Involving people with disabilities for volunteering	8
• How to engage volunteers with disabilities	9
• Working methods	10
• Motivations	10
• Benefits	12
Volunteering as a step towards employment	13
Overcoming barriers	15
Difficulties and challenges in working with disability	17
EVS as an opportunity for youth with disabilities	21
• Interview of Amanda	22
• Interview of Klodjan	24
• Story of Ruth	26
• Story of Nazli	27
• Interview of Anya	28
Support for volunteers with disabilities	30
Volunteering in mix-abled groups	33
• Reflection of Monika	33
• Reflection of Eduardo	36
• Reflection of Elton	38
Supporting individuals	40
Work must go on!	44
Disabled Free Fest: summary of the project	49
Adaptive diving: experience of partners	54
Disabled Free Fest in psychologist eye	56
Best practice by local volunteers in Didyma	58
Foreign partners	60
Local partners	62
Project' outputs	63
Resources	64

INTRODUCTION

This Manual is based on a practical experience which we learned during the Large-scale EVS event: Disabled Free Fest, supported by Erasmus+ Programme and implemented by System and Generation Association (Ankara) on October 2015 in Didyma (Turkey).

System and Generation Association since 2008 is actively involved for promoting volunteering and involvement of people to this social service. One of our aims in volunteer area is to encourage number of people involved to voluntary work and to engage a wider diversity of volunteers. We passionately believes that volunteering is a key way to enabling people from socially excluded groups to participate in their community.

We are very pleased to have been able to work with our local and International partners to produce this Manual.

We hope organisations will find this Manual as a valuable tool when looking for – and retaining – volunteers, especially among people with disabilities.

We are thankful to 1001 Love Volunteers for the help to publish this Manual!

The aim of the Manual is to help organizations who are working for developing volunteering, to support and value volunteers with disabilities, to increase number of volunteer among people with disabilities for their social inclusion.

Team of System & Generation Association



The best way to find yourself
is to lose yourself in the
service of others.

Mahatma Gandhi



Who can be a volunteer?

Svitlana Sobova

Disabled people should have the same rights, choices and opportunities as not disabled people. This applies as much in a field of volunteering as elsewhere.

Voluntary Work is a kind of social service contributed by someone who devotes his time and energy not for material rewards in return but to make our society a better place to live. Participation in Volunteer Work is a manifestation of human equality, mutual love and learning an expression of love, care and sharing a fulfillment of civic responsibility and contribution to the society.

Anyone can be a volunteer. It doesn't matter how much time you have to spare or what skills you have. Volunteers are excited to give. They are motivated, talented, and make themselves available to you at no charge. They willingly give you their hearts and minds to help you in your mission to make the world a better place. Sometimes, a volunteer's motivation is professional in nature. The experience helps him or her to develop new skills and advance their careers. On a fundamental level, however, volunteering one's time and talent makes people feel good.

With so many people volunteering in so many different ways, the individual reasons for volunteering are almost endless. Probably the best reason of all -- and it's likely why most people volunteer -- is to help others by making a difference and giving back to their community. One of the best reasons to volunteer is that it is tied to something you're passionate about. Another great reason to volunteer is that volunteerism can benefit a professional resume. Volunteering provides many great new challenges, relationships, and rewarding circumstances. Volunteerism promotes personal growth and self-esteem. It brings people together from diverse backgrounds to work toward a common goal. It is an opportunity to explore new personal interests and goals. An opportunity to have fun and try something new.

When we speak about motivation for volunteering of people with disabilities we just can underline - individuals with disabilities have many of the same motivations as volunteers without disabilities: wanting to give back, build a resume, meet a community-service requirement for graduation or an organization, or just fill the hours in a day. However, be aware that people with disabilities do not necessarily have the same opportunities to volunteer because of intentional or unintentional community barriers.

As a specific motivations to be a volunteer for people with disabilities are: to feel needed, to demonstrate equal position in society, to take a working experience for possible employment in



Svitlana Sobova

Coordinator of the
project: Disabled
Free Fest / Ukraine

People with disabilities

a future, to keep busy, for recognition, to repay a debt, to learn something new, for escape from own problems/ difficulties, to be challenged, to feel proud, to make new friends, as therapy, to be part of a society, to be INVOLVED.

*Volunteer are not paid --
not because they are worthless,
but because they are priceless.*





VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:

Involving people with disabilities for volunteering

Alexandra Lyutskanova

Volunteering enables individuals to share experience and strengths and to develop new skills. The widespread availability of technology has moved volunteering into broader areas where personal mobility issues, lack of transport or even lack of time have traditionally been a barrier to participation for some people.



Through the International volunteering program, the disability community can be a bridge those cultural and geographical gaps. In order to become an effective provider of volunteering opportunities to disabled volunteers it is necessary to understand the nature of the barriers that disabled people face. We recognise that at present disabled people do not have the same opportunities or choices as non-disabled people in many areas of their lives. Nor do they enjoy equal respect or full inclusion in society on an equal basis. But as a organization which wants to include people with special needs in their system - those tips may be helpful.



Alexandra Lyutskanova
EVS Volunteer of System and Generation Association
Project: Join our Journey 2015 / Bulgaria

How to engage volunteers with disabilities?

The first thing can be actively recruiting disabled volunteers to perform specific tasks. Disabled people should have the same rights, choices and opportunities as non-disabled people. To assess the level of any additional expertise, resources and assistance which might be needed when using disabled people or people with long-term health conditions. To provide/create a structured programme incorporating disabled volunteers for a period of time and offering them specific training in a job role afterwards. This suggestion applies as much in the field of volunteering as elsewhere.

In undertaking the role of the manager and supervisor and related systems they need to take into account the volunteer's specific disability or long-term health condition and how it might affect their individual requirements. There should be an individual who is responsible





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for ensuring that all barriers are identified and adjustments made. This might be the volunteer team manager or it might be another person who has developed expertise in the role. Consider individuals' interests. People work better when they like what they are doing and feel they are contributing.

Working methods

Some adjustments are needed to include people with disabilities in organization's work. It is important to remember that adjustments don't necessarily mean to change the physical environment. The organization should always consult with the individual when considering making adjustments as they will know their own condition and what adjustments might be best.

For example - swapping duties around can be helpful, so that a person with a mental health problem can start their duties later on. Providing special equipment like screen reading software for a visually impaired person who needs to use a computer. Change the work processes adapting it to the disabled people's needs (allowing a person with Dyslexia to provide details using dictation software instead of applications forms), etc. The organization can integrate the volunteer into the workplace - include him/her in conversations, coffee breaks, parties, and staff meetings. Respect their privacy and effectively communicate with them.

With the intention to both help and to learn, volunteers with disabilities will be viewed as role models in the disability community of their home country and of society in general, as they are seen to contribute to their host organisations with tangible outcomes. The volunteers themselves will gain a sense of achievement. First, the volunteers with disabilities may face challenges due to his or her impairments, but it is the organization's responsibility to help them overcome those fears.



Maarja Tamm
EVS Volunteer
Project: Disabled Free
Fest / Estonia

Motivations

There are many types of reasonable adjustments that can assist disabled people to participate fully in volunteering opportunities. Becoming a volunteer means earning a lot and there are enormous amount of reasons to become part of this active subculture.

Firstly - the opportunity to gain personal development, to acquire new skills and knowledge is usable in many other areas. To support a specific organisation or cause, which will develop the opportunities to be socialise.

People with disabilities

Volunteering gives the opportunity of being part of a returning to work strategy by playing an active role in society. Last but not least - experience for career development and changing life style.



Give them responsibilities! Help them and let them help you. Step up for them.

- Maarja Tamm



Benefits

In order to provide more effective service delivery and customer care, improved awareness of disability related issues is very helpful. Having expertise in the organisation helps to identify and overcome potential barriers to disabled people and makes it easier for them to be part of the society.

Many disabled people have acquired strategic skills and knowledge about problem solving and overcoming barriers that can be applied to a variety of circumstances. This gives to the organization access to a pool of useful and skilled talent.

As an active organization, thinking through what might be needed for a disabled person to act as a volunteer is highly important. This helps develop understanding about the barriers disabled people face in paid employment. Which leads to development of employment policies and procedures.

Hiring disabled people can improve staff morale. Experience in organisations who have positive and proactive policies in terms of employing disabled people have found other employees find this reassuring and it helps to develop a belief that an organisation cares about it staff. The organization should prepare the staff for the volunteering by making them feel comfortable working with people with disabilities through education and conversation. Those actions will lead to enhanced business reputation. Organisations who are seen to be putting equality for disabled people into practice can benefit from an enhanced reputation generally, which can mean that they become employers or service providers of choice for many more people disabled and non-disabled alike.

It is important to remember that many disabled people are highly skilled and have worked in a wide variety of fields and sectors, or may have been responsible for organising activities for others in their family or local community.

International Volunteering services can strengthen cross-cultural understanding, build confidence in communication at multiple levels, will foster a network to share necessary knowledge, resources and will develop broaden the base of leaders in disability community.

*Service to others is the rent you pay for
your room here on Earth.*
- Muhammad Ali - Boxing Champion



Volunteering as a step towards employment

Many people look at Volunteering as a way for them to help other people and whilst this is of course true, by undertaking voluntary work, people can actually help themselves a lot too – it can improve their overall employability.

Most of us - specialists of volunteer management and support, observing that volunteering builds resumes, provides career exploration, and demonstrates each volunteer's abilities, but can we make the case that volunteering directly affects employability especially when we speak about people with disabilities?

We found out a few main straightness which make us believe that volunteer experience helping people with disabilities to enhance their chances to find paid work and be employed. Actually this straightness has the same effect for people without disabilities.



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- **Networking:** One of the main benefits of volunteering is that it can provide volunteers with an excellent way of developing their professional and personal networks. They could engage and connect with people who never have had the opportunity to meet. These connections could lead to other valuable introductions and potentially to other paid employment opportunities, so make the most of any networking opportunities that arise in any voluntary work that people undertake.
- **Skills Development:** Volunteering can of course help people to strengthen and develop their existing skills by allowing to keep 'their hand in' as it were. Of course volunteering can help to develop and learn new skills – skills that they have not had the opportunity to acquire or develop.
- **Get new experiences:** If person has always worked in the one market sector, volunteering can be an excellent way to get new experiences and diversify personal skillset. Embrace volunteering and the new experiences it offers – who knows where they could lead.

People who face barriers to employment as in our situation – people with disabilities (low self-esteem, isolation, health problems and low levels of social capital) – are often prevented by the same barriers from participating in volunteering and other activities. In order for job seekers to benefit from volunteering that people with disabilities by using support from organisations with experience of helping volunteers, such barriers raising their level of involvement in supporting successful progress towards the labor market. Health and well-being can be an important barrier to participation in both volunteering and employment. Both physical health and mental well-being issues of self-esteem and confidence can prevent people's progress to the labour market. The project evaluation found 'notable improvements in outcomes around confidence and self-esteem' and reported improvements against other health and well-being measures.



Overcoming barriers

Type of Barrier	Example	How this barrier was overcome by organisations
Access	There are no rooms/ space physically accessible for a person in a wheelchair.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lowering expectations of volunteers •Time and experience - increased comfort in situation • Changes in the environment
Individual support needs	The volunteers were at different levels and the programme had to be adapted to take this into account.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Setting up different support needs sessions for groups based on ability and skills •Offering one-on-one sessions
Travel	It was difficult to travel for the person with wheelchair to the venue of the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Motivating volunteers to travel •Organizing assistance from other person
Time	People with different disabilities and without disabilities - need different time for doing a same tasks. And it could influence to all working programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Running shorter/longer sessions •Rescheduling sessions • Flexibility
Recruitment	A key challenge was recruiting enough volunteers with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Improving volunteer management systems •Cooperation with sending organizations •Skype interview with potential volunteers for better understanding of project
Way people think	The society tends to focus on what the people with disabilities can't do rather than what they can do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Change the way people think and act towards disabled people •Promote involvement of people with disabilities in a society level



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Difficulties and challenges in working with disability: Philosophical reflection on disability

Adrian Melnic

I'm not limping, this is my dance.

We are living in a world of permanent transition, nowadays, the world change its image from moment to moment trying to overcome a multitude of issues that have arisen. People need deep and creative reflection in order to act straight in the point where the real change can realize. But what to do when this point is our society when our eyes look at those events that take place in front of us? French anthropologist Claude Levi-Straus suggests that in this case our reflection becomes more easy and difficult at the same time. More easy because our experience is in continuous touch with the events and more difficult because we understand in rare cases the complexity of social transformations, and because the apparent motive that led to the specific situation in which we are the actors are different from the real causes that offers us the role in that specific frame.

WHO (World Health Organization) is estimating a number of 1 billion persons worldwide that are living with disability. At the same time this number is expected to grow significantly by 2020, so EU Commissions along with other organizations created a strategy on removing barriers and ensure equal participation. It means people with special needs are among us, our mates and relatives, our friends and neighbors. Sometimes we don't even observe that the one who is doing same things as us is doing it in a different way or to say in other terms has a functional diversity. But this diversity is a needed element; it makes the picture of the society look more colorful it makes the nature reveal all the possibilities. All of us, who consider themselves human beings, are taking part in society life. Despite we are all different; this condition of being human inserts between us the sign of equality, the principle of equity, and the connection that can be reached through empathy.

I think that the first step that has to be done when facing a challenge in working with disability is the awareness of presence of a difference and accepting that the person we are dealing with is a full member of the community, who has the same rights and the same need as everyone. The problem is that he or she sometimes doesn't have the proper conditions to unfold the personal-



Adrian Melnic
EVS Volunteer
Project: Disabled Free Fest
M.D. Resident fellow
in Rehabilitation and
Physical Medicine /
Republic of Moldova



ity. After we pass this mental operation a new question appears, namely: "how to help and involve the person with special needs to work with us?". There are a big number of health conditions that can lead to disability, and each has its own manifestations and symptoms. To avoid a useless for this moment list of medical nosology and deviate from the subject in discussion let's use the model of Functioning, Disability and Health proposed in 2005 by specialists from health care. So functions, activities and participation are always influenced by 2 types of factors: intrinsic and extrinsic. It is important to mention that this type of dichotomy is common from long times ago for many disciplines and directions of human thinking, but here we would like to make an analogy with Descartes' placing of Subject and Object in his famous Cognito ergo sum - "I think, therefore I am".

So, I think, I reflect, this is me, and this is the world, the things that are around. I am in this world of being, of becoming, from moment to moment; we are becoming our micro-cosmos. A disability can be seen as a question that the being is asking himself/herself - "Why there is not a correspondence between my micro and their macro cosmos?". If we examine for instance the sensory dysfunctions can be one of the causes which effect is the cut in the link, in the nexus between the self and the "out of self". The reason is the non-functioning or incomplete functioning of a sensory organ. But in this dialectics there is one moment that should be considered. If one of the sensory organs is diminished in function it means other sensory organs' functions are increased. By the same law of compensation we can examine and many types of disability, and see the mechanisms that permit individual to adapt to exterior. If compensation works that is an argument for affirmation that personal limitation can be viewed as an advance. So we transform the disability into ability. Even sometimes the inversion and transformation of disability into ability is difficult, it is one of the essential moments and keys that permit us to integrate and to interact with functional diverse people. One more useful aspect to helps us in social inclusion is that in spite a limitation, a disability or even incapacity of a person to perform an activity there should be a lot of other activities, tasks that this person can do, so we or in this particular case other volunteers, or organizations working with disability are those who have to discover the full potential of the person with needs.

Now, for completing world's becoming image, we have to do an additional inversion of the Subject and the Object and to construct the following question "why the macro/ exterior reality doesn't correspond to my interior / micro reality". The complementarity in both of the cases is in cosmos - reality, so we can affirm that there is always a correspondence between the self and the world, and at this moment we have to stress the importance emerging from the opposition between the self-becoming and the environment in which we are becoming. To say it simpler the difficulties that can



be faced from external contextual factors are the non-supportive or inaccessible work environment or place. It is the same that we mentioned above that I would like to do something but I don't have the proper conditions and tools. Everyone has interests and skills in different domains. As a volunteer as a worker I am identifying myself with a specific occupation. In rehabilitation terms we call it vocational activity – the one I like to do, and I am ready to work at. That field of social inclusion is in process of development but there are considerable premises to hope that integration and inclusion will give results in time.

We insisted on theoretical analyses and philosophical structures in order to show the complexity of the topic in discussion. Disability needs a trans-disciplinary approach as it involves teamwork so we can say it is composed of many levels.

Since we are on the subject of involving people with disability it would be necessary to show some practical aspects. The difficulties can occur at different points of interaction such as mutual understanding, self-motivation, interpersonal communication or task oriented activities. Depending on type of disability other volunteers and workers can face the next barriers and difficulties that come from health condition of person with disability:



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- Withdrawal of the task
- Exceeding deadlines
- Frustration, sadness, isolation and sense of exclusion
- Low self-esteem and self-determination
- Difficulties in cooperation and relationship

In most of the listed cases the barriers were set in times by some traditional or old models where people with functional diversity were excluded from social life and work. The efforts to repair this mistake are more and more notable in modern world. There are a lot of new technologies and coping strategies that helps facilitate participation. A relationship, a co-operation always involves two parts so both sides should find ways and means for the result achievement. Give more time, listen, repeat and read just the message needed and compromise if you want the person with disability work with you. Everyone is unique and beautiful in own way so do not ignore and try to adapt to functional diversity and things will change.

People with special needs who are volunteering are a great example for society. Their experience their active civic involvement serves as a background for motivation and stimulation of others with disability or without to participate in community change. Despite the differences, physical, sensorial or cognitive limitation anyone can bring the change and transformation in society.

Volunteering is a way of non-formal education. In case volunteers have a disability they can teach us a lot of things - a different world view, a different way of dealing with reality, thus they are valuable personalities. Together in unity we can function better, as a whole organism - the society will do its steps to become fairer. To improve it, let's give a try, a chance to those who are different!



EVS as an opportunity for youth with disabilities

European Voluntary Service

This activity allows young people aged 17-30 to express their personal commitment through unpaid and full-time voluntary service for up to 12 months in another country within or outside the European Union. Young volunteers are given the opportunity to contribute to the daily work of organisations dealing with youth information and policies, young people's personal and socio-educational development, civic engagement, social care, inclusion of disadvantaged, environment, non-formal education programmes, ICTs and media literacy, culture and creativity, development co-operation, etc.

A project can include between 1 and 30 volunteers who can do their voluntary service either individually or in group.

Participating organisations are responsible for:

- Arranging subsistence, lodging and local transports of volunteers;
- Envisaging tasks and activities for volunteers that respect the qualitative principles of the European Voluntary Service, as described in the EVS Charter;
- Providing to volunteers an on-going task-related, linguistic, personal and administrative support throughout the duration of the activity. The participation in an EVS activity must be free of charge for volunteers, with the exception of a possible contribution for travel costs (if the Erasmus+ grant does not fully cover these costs) and additional expenses not linked to the implementation of the activity. The essential costs for volunteers' participation in the EVS activity are covered by the Erasmus+ grant or through other means afforded by the participating organisations. Besides the support provided to the volunteers by the participating organ-





isations, the National Agencies or regional SALTOS organise a Training and Evaluation Cycle to be attended by each volunteer and consisting of: a) an on-arrival training; b) a mid-term evaluation, for voluntary services lasting more than 6 months.

The EVS budget has an eligible costs for special needs support which is directly related to participants with disabilities. Costs for subsistence of accompanying persons.

Amanda Svanhall

EVS Volunteer
Project: Disabled Free
Fest / Sweden

My Reflection of EVS:

Amanda Svanhall

• What kind of experience of EVS-volunteering you had as a person with disabilities?

"My EVS was over than my expectation even though I did not know what to expect from my month stay in Turkey. I did not feel treated as less able or defined by my disability even though it limited me in the eyes of some people in a couple of situations."

• Now after your volunteering what are your thoughts about EVS?

"I think that EVS is a great platform for people with as well as without disabilities, I also think that the EVS is a great opportunity to reach out to people and talk about disabilities to normalize it and make people more aware of situations which people with disabilities can encounter in today's society."

• What kind of challenges you faced during the project?

"I don't think that I did face any bigger challenges than anybody else because of my disability. I do have a problem when it comes to asking people for help, I do not like it and people do not want to make me feel un-independent so they tried not to offer help to much, but that problem only comes from myself as a person."

• What feeling you have yourself that how your contribution affected to other volunteers, workers and people in your everyday life?

"I hope that I inspired, and will continue to inspire people with disabilities and people that might not have enough self-confidence to take the step into the world of volunteering. I also hope that I showed the people (both people I know as well as strangers), that I can do anything, I am motivated enough to do, the same goes for everybody else with a disability, it's often the society that limits you, not the disability itself."

People with disabilities

• **Did you need some special support/what should be taken into consideration when NGO is hosting volunteers with disabilities?**

"It's always important to ask before the project, if the volunteers need some special support or adjustments but what is more important is to make the volunteer feel like she/he can talk to the people responsible for the project if any problems come up along the way."

• **Your thoughts about why it is important to involve people with special needs to be volunteers?**

"We need to show the world and ourselves how much we have to offer to the people around us. We deserve the wonderful feeling of volunteering that makes you feel like you have accomplished something amazing."





VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:



Klodjan Karaj

EVS Volunteer
Project: Disabled Free
Fest / Albania

...it is still not easy for me to adapt the life of those with not disabilities...

- Klodjan Karaj

• **What is it like to be a volunteer who has some disabilities?**

"When I was blind I felt like I was different from others, I felt like I won't never be like my friends at the same age, like I wouldn't keep up with them. I was dependable to others, there were a lot of things that I wanted to do but I couldn't without willing of others to give me a hand.

After I gained somehow my sights (when I was 14 years old) things turn out to be different. I started feeling more alive and more passionate about life: I wanted to be active and do something in order to feel more worthy as a person for myself and the society.

Since there I have started to be volunteer in every activity that I can. Despite my disabilities (not full sight) I try to feel like all the others and even if I fail sometimes I try not to express it. I try to keep move forward and do something worthy because I know even my tinny actions can make a big difference in society.

• **Which benefits you gain as a volunteer and also other volunteers when they are working with you?**

"Being a person with some disabilities/special needs myself I feel more worthy when I volunteer, like I am paying back this planet/world for things that we take for granted. You are benefiting a lot in the meaning of personal development, learning new things and having a great social time with other volunteers as well.

Regarding to other volunteers I think that they are benefiting a lot especially living with a volunteer with some special needs, in the meaning of reflection and appreciation what life has offered them and what can they do for the people that are different like them."

• **What difficulties what you have faced while your volunteering?**

"In everyday life while volunteering I see myself between those who don't have disabilities at all and them who have. It is easy for me to understand those with disabilities due to the fact that I have been one and still I am. From the other hand it is still not easy for me to adapt the life of those with not disabilities at all."



"In the institutions/Rehabilitations center it would be better to have some volunteers with disabilities to work with people of other disabilities. Like me. I can work for them since I understand them like nobody else and I think that more than physical help a person need spiritual help, to find someone to go deeply and understand them."

- Klodjan Karaj





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People shouldn't be afraid to talk with me...

- Ruth Wolf



Ruth Wolf

EVS Volunteer
Project: Meeting of
Generations 2015/
Germany

I think that all people need from each other and/or from the organization, is that people are open, they listen each others' needs and they are honest enough to tell people if they aren't sure what the other person needs. So here is my advice: You should communicate! And don't be afraid of different people!

But meanwhile you shouldn't do everything for them. Just because person is disabled, it doesn't mean that he/she can't live on their own. So for example don't always take their bag without asking. Sometimes you should give them their freedom and empower them: that they can do things for themselves and feel independent and free. Don't stare at them and wonder what they have or what they think. If you are interested in their story, just go there and ask.

For me it was never even a thought, why disabled people shouldn't also be part of the EVS. I was never afraid, that there could be some difficulties, because we communicated openly straight from the beginning and everything was clear to me.

I think I influenced so they appreciate things more than before. At least this is something what people always tell me after they met me. Sometimes they ask, how it can be possible, that I have a handicap and still I can be so full of life, meanwhile they are complaining e.g. why their hair look bad. Maybe this is one thing I've learned through my disability, that I am thankful for everything I have and I never complain about little things. Because in the end I know that these things doesn't matter at all!"



"I hope that because of my influence people realize that it is absolutely normal to live or work also with people with disabilities. People shouldn't be afraid to talk with me, and there aren't any strange questions, as long you ask with respect."

-Ruth Wolf

People with disabilities

Whole inclusion process for disabled people should be longer then just one project.

- Nazlı Şenay

In project guideline of Erasmus + Programme is written that it should be given priority to people with disabilities and people with disadvantages. It is good that European Union is trying to include disabled people in social life. I think that all people deserve chance for good life and equal possibilities.

I was really glad to be a part of Disabled Free Festival in Didyma. I like the goal of this event: to interfere disabled people from region into society and include disabled volunteers in project. In my

opinion it is important to involve disabled people in social life and broke very common thoughts: that people with disabilities can not do some things and that they should be locked at home. A few months ago I went to Romania as disabled volunteer. And I had to come back because of my disability and enviroment which was not ready to deal with it.

I had faced many problems there. For example for me it was always problem to speak with people. People didn't speak with me because they did not know what to do, because I was dif-

ferent. But I felt that they don't want me and it makes me more apart from people around.

For people as I am - with celebral palsy it could be one of the solutions to be more active and open for communication – organizing the drama groups for solving own problem. In this kind of groups people can easily understand each other. Actually whole inclusion process for disabled people should be longer then just one project.



Nazlı Şenay

EVS Volunteer
Project: Healthy life - your' "new high" - in Romania/ Turkey





I just wanted to be an usual – as all.

- Anya Yashyna



Anya Yashyna

EVS Volunteer
Project: Disable Free
Fest/ Belarus

What kind of experience of EVS-volunteering you had as a person with special needs?

"For long time I could not make decision about my participation in this project. Because I understood that I should work there. And I didn't want do everything just in formal way – I really wanted to be a useful. And for this I should to choose correct tasks which I will able to do. And thats why it was not so easy desicion, because of my disability: I'am using a weelchair and can not move freely without assistance, my left hand isnot working well and level of my English is not good enough."

Now after your volunteering what are your thoughts about EVS?

"Now, when I am looking back to this experience I can say: it was the best experience in last few years in my life. When people from different countries and different living conditions, with own unique understanding of life, coming together – this is a chanceto study from each other. Those close touching of cultures make us observe, analyze, see how all of us are similar even if we have so many differences in our cultures. I think this kind of cultural diversity and cooperation is becoming very important, especially nowadays - when political conflicts are becoming more dangerous."

What kind of challenges you faced during the project?

"The main problem for me was the environment in hosting place. As usually as an independent person I do not use assistance of others but in hosting city I couldn't manage move by myself. Because of generally infrastructure of the city was not "friendly" to wheelchair people.

Second main challenge was extra care from all my colleagues, especially in beginning of project when they did not use to me with my conditions. They were helping me even when it was not needed and didn't listen to my opinion about that situation. In the same time when I was really facing difficulties – they did not always remember about helping integration. But I already get used to it. And Even think that it is normal reaction. And you – if you are person with disabilities – should try a lot to be seeing and hearing in collective."

What are your feelings about how your contribution affected to other volunteers, workers and people in your everyday life?

"Of course I would like to say that I was as all others in the team, but it wouldn't be a true. For most of the people especially in

beginning of the project I was an "object" which always need help. In that kind of situation the person rarely feel as a friend or as a pretty girl etc. You still feel yourself as outside of life which is happening out of the education/ official part of the project. Sometimes I felt same. For our team I was a "hero", "strong woman", but I just wanted to be an usual – as all."

I hope my example make other participants: healty, beauful guys understand how many they already have, how many they already can and they just do not need lost time. I am sincerely glad if some of them start think about it."

Did you need some special support/what should be taken into consideration when NGO is hosting volunteers with special needs?

"I am happy that my assistant was my friend. Because with her I had a chance to discuss all necessary assistance, help which I could need during the project, to not have an unexpected "surprises". I saw many times in my life when people with phisical disabilities were not realistic with they assistant and after last had big difficulties in their job. The option of you inviting close friend to be your assistant helps preventing that kind of situations.

I could reccomend for those people who need help and people who would like to help before start cooperation better to make contact before and discuss all moments and situations which could happen. It this case it will be easier give assistance for person with disabilities without any stress."





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VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:

Support for volunteers with disabilities

Ana Amat & Alberto Tortolero



Ana Amat

EVS Volunteer

Project: Disabled Free
Fest/ Spain

It's used to think that people with special needs have more difficulties to participate in social life. But really is not like that, they only have the difficulties that we put it in our society. We created our society for us, for our way to work, without think in diversity, without think that there are so many different ways to work, that exist functional diversity and not all the people can fulfill our standard way to be involved in the society. For this reason, we have to keep in mind some basic aspects when you have to involved people with special needs:



People with disabilities

- **Interaction:** is one of the biggest mistakes, try to avoid personal questions or any kind of questions in the beginning. The best way is introduce yourself and explain how you are connected with him/her, it could be necessary to take his/her hand, place a hand on his/her shoulder or even touch each other's faces to make a proper introduction, depends overall in the special need that she/he had. After the introduction, you have to explain the activity that you are going to do, explain the different steps of the activity, including the beginning and the end – while making as much eye contact as possible. Its super important advances all the things that are going to happen.

- **Observation:** Remember that all behavior is communication and some people with special needs are unable to verbalize discomfort. It would be good keep a lookout and think about what this behavior is communicating to you. If you're not sure what you're seeing, ask his/her family or other adults for advice.

"As a person with disabilities I believe that to be different is not bad or wrong."

-Iva Savova

- **Use common sense:** put safety first and arrange the environment for physical and emotional comfort.

- **Be flexible:** the whole point of teaching is to use a variety of methods to help another person understand and master new skills. If a person does not have the appropriate motor skills for an activity, help him/her go through the motions and assign a buddy to help him/her practice on the sidelines for a few minutes. May a person have difficulty about understanding some concepts; but when those same concepts are presented in a game or hands-on art project, they make more sense.

- **Be consistent:** If a set of rules are presented to the group, apply those rules consistently to everyone. It's a good idea started all the activities of your expectations and the day's schedule at the beginning of the activity.

- **Use visual, auditory or tactile cues:** Having the right cues in an environment can mean the difference between participation and non-participation for many people with special needs. For example, in special needs as autism disorder is useful to use index



Iva Savova
EVS Volunteer
Project: Disabled Free
Fest/ Bulgaria



VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:

cards with simple written instructions to help them to remember the rules for appropriate behavior – if they do not read, substitute a hand-drawn cartoon or other picture for the words. Also you can use creative ways to get attention to your participants and make a easier routine, for example singing the instructions, clapping, snapping or whistling. Tactile cues such as gently touching a person's shoulder, offering a blanket or other soft fabric, or providing silly putty are easy ways to mark a transition and get a person's attention.

- **Have a plan and a back-up plan:** You know what they say about the best-laid plans. In the world of special needs, there is always a Plan B, and usually a Plan C. Make sure that there is space to calm down and move freely if things go badly. Think about what each participant can do instead of focusing on what they can't contribute.

- **Be positive:** A positive attitude is the single most important quality for anyone who works with people with special needs.



Volunteering in mix-abled group

Monika Radkiewicz

In a group of volunteers cooperation is usually limited to doing particular tasks. The Disabled Free Fest Project, which engaged also volunteers with special needs, made us look at different things more widely. We came in a group that consisted of 3 people – two of which were volunteers with special needs. My task was mainly being their translator during meetings, discussions about further actions, planning the Festival or in case of some basic conversations they wanted to have during meals or their spare time. On many occasions I had to remind them what we were going to do, even 4-6 times, and check whether they prepared and packed everything necessary for particular activities, e.g. clothes suitable for the weather. When we wanted to go out with volunteers with special needs there was always somebody to help them push the wheelchair over an obstacle or climb up the stairs of a bus. I had the feeling that everyone of us was sort of

an “guardian angel” ready to help whenever it was needed. While planning the Festival, I found all the ideas and advice that volunteers with special needs gave highly precious – what we considered simple to organise and conduct, for them could seem impossible. Learning how to look at the world with their eyes and take into consideration their abilities was truly important and it made planning the Festival’s workshops a bit easier.

It is important to support the volunteers who work as companions of the volunteers with special needs. Sometimes it is enough to hear: “I can take care of them for 2 hours and you can go for a walk, read something, get some rest, if you want.” Or: “I can tend to them and you don’t worry, go to your classes”. It does not take much but it is important to have a moment just to hear yourself. Because you constantly have to be with the special needs volunteers, you do not have much time to get to know other volunteers and you feel a bit lonely. We spend our free time together trying to bond with each other, often outside the place we normally sit in. The situation is a bit different if in a group of volunteers only one of them is of special needs – then the others can replace each other in taking care of that person. But when it is only one volunteer with two volunteers with special needs, it gets a bit more complicated, especially when you have to be in two different plac-



Monika Radkiewicz
EVS Volunteer
Project: Disabled Free
Fest/ Poland





VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:

es at the same time translating something from English to your mother tongue. When there is more than one volunteer you can follow a certain system: in one situation the first one is the translator, then the other; one: “today I’m staying in and tomorrow it

is your turn”. The cooperation between volunteers is crucial – it lets each and every one take a breath, get some rest from supervising the volunteers at all times, checking if they know what to do, what to pack and if they remember about morning or evening toilet.

Volunteers working with volunteers with special needs should be empathic, kind and open-minded. They should be flexible and take into consideration other volunteers’ hints.

The conditions of the place should be friendly and adjusted to the needs of volunteers with special needs. Everything has an influence on the atmosphere of the place: volunteers engaged to the project, coordinators supervising the whole event, partners of the project and the level of their engagement and last but not least – the place in which everything is held.

A coordinator who is working with a group of people does not have an easy task. Preparing and conducting trainings is fairly easy. However, orchestrating everything in time and space – volunteers’ arrivals and departures, organizing

transport, coordinating the meetings which often get shifted in time because of the changes brought by partners and then in the end trying to reconcile it all with the project’s plan – this is a



hard work. The coordinator has to plan his own actions step by step but he also should be able to react with ease to any changes that suddenly come up. He needs to be rigid towards volunteers at times to make sure the project goes according to the plan. Sometimes he needs to find a compromise but he should also be the voice of reason in the group. A good coordinator has to have good observation skills and be able to objectively evaluate the decisions made by volunteers. Volunteers, on the other hand, should feel the comfort of having someone they can go to and ask for help or council.

Motivating the volunteers is not an easy task. It all depends on their own intentions and expectations towards the project, what was it that interested them the most: the topic of the project or the place where the project is to be held? Organizations that send particular volunteers have a huge responsibility in that matter because it is them who are supposed to find suitable people for the job. They should get to know the volunteers before sending them to take part in the project. It is important to remind the volunteers the aim of the project. One way of motivating volunteers is giving them a bonus free day or some attractive activity – visiting an interesting place or the possibility to get to know somebody new. It is better to notice good intentions and reward the tasks that were performed properly, it is a great motivator and makes people more engaged. In case of a problematic volunteer the best way is to give this person a very important and responsible task which would involve sacrificing his time and focusing on doing the job well. The task should not be too easy and it is crucial that it is an important part of the whole project.

"The most important thing is to see the world from their point of view. To understand their needs, and not to underestimate their capacity."

- Elma Hoxha

"I am sure that when you work with people with special needs you always receive more than you give."

-Elma Hoxha



Elma Hoxha
EVS Volunteer
Project: Disabled Free
Fest/ Albania



I deserved it...

—Eduardo Martin Del Valle



**Eduardo Martin
Del Valle**

EVS Volunteer
Project: Disabled Free
Fest/ Spain

How much time does a person need to take a decision? Well, the answer is easy. Enough time. The time you think you need. When you are about to start any kind of project, a lot of questions appear in your mind, like when? How? Where? How much? Or with whom? to make it. As time goes by, you realize that the majority of these answers do not depend on you.

It doesn't mean that you don't have to act or think about it, because a lot of people will influence on it, positively or negatively, and after all final responds will come to you.

Ice breaking moment as becoming part of new things and stepping into new stages in your life is not easy at all. You should know your objective clearly in order to make this kind of decision without being affected by your emotions. In my case, I chose to be involved into new adventures because I have finished my study for bachelor degree.

There are a lot of projects in which I have been participating. The decision to start an European Voluntary Service in Turkey was easy for me and the reason was my previous experience participating in social projects in this country. I was fascinated by the idea of coming back to this country.

My experience in the Disabled Free Fest was absolutely constructive. I felt myself fulfilled just because I was working for a better changes in society. At the beginning, I assumed the responsibility of creating and designing the webpage of the event. I worked on it during one week.

When days were passing, I began to go through a period of upheaval in my personal life. Many changes started to happen, strong and hard ones, but I deserved it. I deserved it because it is help me to learn a lot about myself.

There are some periods in our life when the routine "blur" minds and we cannot think clearly about our attitudes and some problems. Does the problems really that important as we use to think about it?

During this EVS, we had the opportunity to work with different people with disabilities - some of them had mental disabilities but the majority had a physical disabilities. This people's lifes are full of difficulties, they are "weather-beaten by hundreds of wars", and that's why they are really feel value of troubles.



So, who is really the person with disabilities? They, who can not see or walk? Or you, because you can not really value own life? That was the main lesson I have learned in Didyma. I was thinking how to give the appropriate, enough and needed importance to problems, and I had learned it.

Without any doubt I can say: this experience was one of the best ones in my life. After finishing the project, I have been in contact with many friends I found there, I have been able to analyze life in a more objective way and I have improved my English quite much. What else I can ask for? It is, truly, a story to tell others when I will be old man.

"I was pretending that I am a disabled person (when I was using a wheelchair of my colleague) for one hour and I felt what it is like. After this project I am sure that I want to study something relevant..."

-Radoslav Georgiev



Radoslav Georgiev
EVS Volunteer
Project: Disabled Free
Fest/ Bulgaria



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VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:

***Be Volunteer = Change Their
and Your LIFE!***

-Elton Biduli



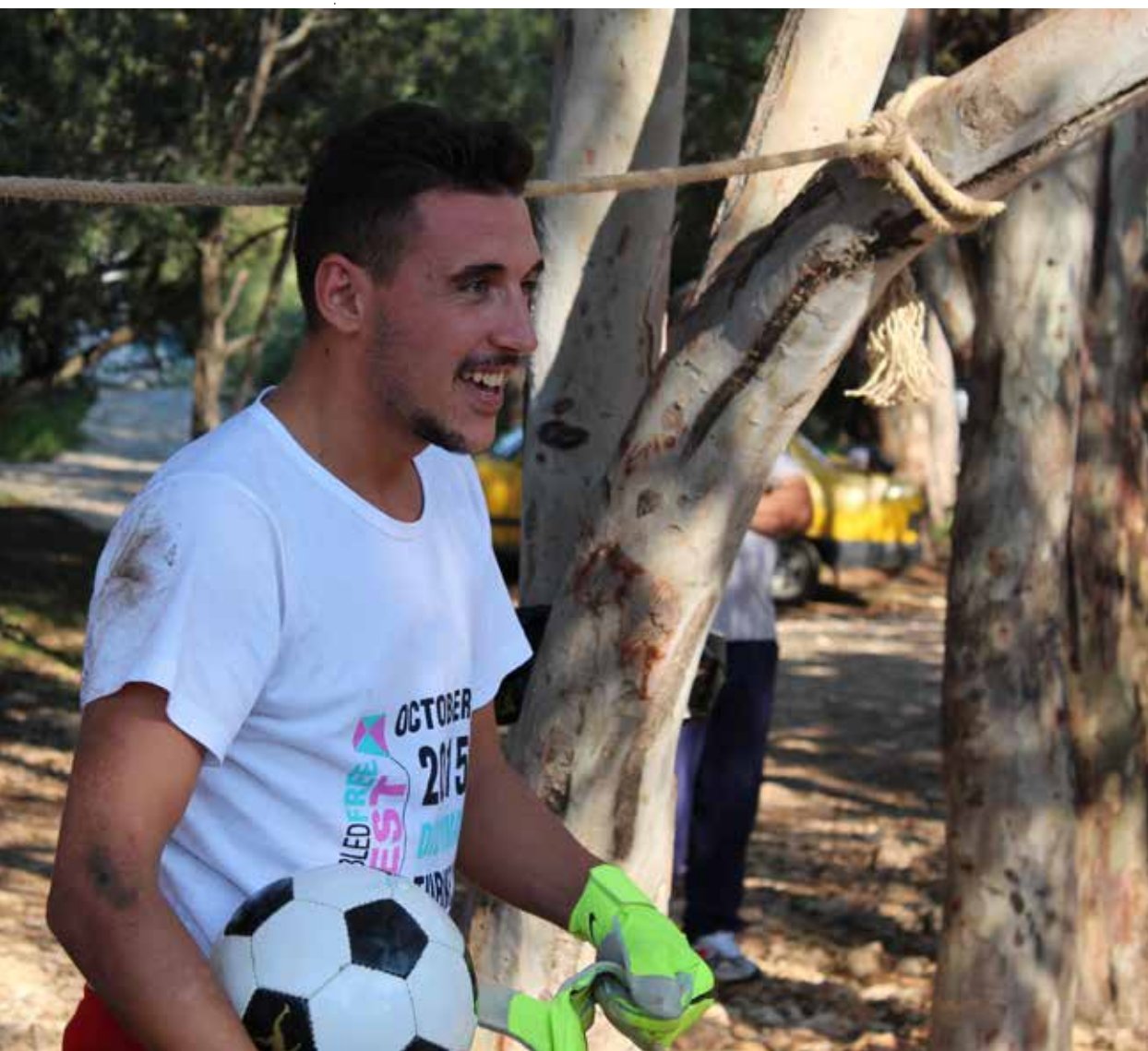
Elton Biduli

EVS Volunteer
Project: Disabled Free
Fest/ Albania

Volunteer - this word means a lot. Volunteering is not something simply what everyone should and can do.

Being a volunteer it means giving your soul sincerely for what you are doing: to give all your best, and everything you have in order to reach your expectations and people that you want to convey the spirit of faith, hope and optimism. All people can be volunteers, but not all can feel the meaning of the volunteering so big.

When we had the opportunity to be and work with people with



People with disabilities

disabilities, I felt very happy. We worked in local organization, which works with people with disabilities. I would like to thank sincerely to the founder of the organization, who enabled us to present this center where we can bring our contribution. Every day a certain group of volunteers went to this center and stay with these people. We enabled them to obtain new knowledge, different experiences with foreigners, to learn new things and give a value for their lives and future. But, foremost this cooperation was a way to tie a bridge of friendships with each other.

Of course, working with these people has its own difficulties. Initially it was very difficult for some volunteers, because it was something completely different from what they had experienced in their life up to that moment. We all have to be cautious that we don't feel pity or sad because of them. We offer them our sincere help and benevolent attention. Together we as volunteers managed to overcome any difficulties and started work.

To work with people with disabilities, it was one of the most beautiful feelings you can feel.

Their hospitality, kindness and purity of heart makes the work with them interesting, variable and extremely happy. And so, our work also became easier, meanwhile they felt very happy about this project. For me they seemed to be more motivated, happy and cheerful,. They were full of hope for a better future and foremost they felt themselves more valuable for society around them. Confident in their abilities and strengths, raise their faces upwards and be very motivated! We, the volunteers, were the boost that they need to highlight all their hidden values. Firstly it made them feel happy and proud of themselves, but secondly we also felt that our work is valuable and important for them as well.

People with disabilities, who took part in the festival: It was easy to read from their eyes, heart and smile felt very excited and very happy for everything we had done for them during these 25 days. I had the honor and privilege to work with them and found myself near them.

Volunteering is at the very core of being a human. No one has made it through life without someone else's help.

- Heather French Henry



Supporting individuals

Viivi Setälä



Viivi Setälä

Vice - Coordinator of
the Project: Disabled
Free Fest/Finland

Every individual is valuable as way he/she is and of course so are the volunteers as well. We must give same circumstances and opportunities to work to every volunteer and we must treat them in equal way. All volunteers shouldn't have same tasks, because they have different interests, wishes and personal obstacles. We should be ready to modify the tasks of each individual according to their interests, wishes and initiatives so the work can be as suitable and enjoyable as possible to this specific volunteer. This should be the base of all activities planned.

When we are working with people with disabilities there is always a risk to focus too much about their disabilities, not about their abilities. The same kind of thing can happen when we are working with different volunteers: we may focus too much on volunteers who have some special needs or disabilities meanwhile we neglect "the other" volunteers. The main obstacle of volunteers must not be only helping volunteers with disabilities: there is general aims of the organization, project and of course volunteer him/herself, which shouldn't be forgotten.

This is a very important aspect of working with volunteers with disabilities that we support "other volunteers" to work with the volunteers with special needs. All volunteers must know about volunteers with disabilities and they need to be aware of what each kind of disability really means in their everyday life. It is possible that person with disabilities don't have any specific needs of help, but in the same time there might be volunteers who need assistance, translations or some other kind of help very often. Volunteers should be open minded and motivated to do volunteering together with these kinds of people and it is our task to keep this motivation up.

When new volunteer comes to work in working team where are also volunteers with disabilities, it is recommended to have special training about what it means to work with people with disabilities. This training can be short part of whole induction of the whole volunteering work in the organization. This training should include topics about:

- 1.General information about working with people with disabilities.
- 2.What kind of volunteers with disabilities organization has got.
- 3.What kind of special needs these volunteers have.
- 4.Do these volunteers with disabilities need some special support

People with disabilities

when they are volunteering? If yes, what kind of support?

5. Volunteering is one way for social inclusion of people with disabilities, so the volunteer work must not be focused on these volunteers with special needs, they should have as similar tasks as the "other volunteers" have.

6. If volunteer feels even a bit exhausted, he/she shouldn't hesitate to ask help and support every time from coordinators, mentors and also other volunteers.

"People with special needs can achieve everything they want if they feel the confidence, support and help of the others. The objective is not about "Make them normal", but to develop themselves to the maximum."

- Juan Carlos Oliva Vallejo



Juan Carlos Oliva Vallejo

EVS Volunteer
Project: Disabled Free Fest/ Spain

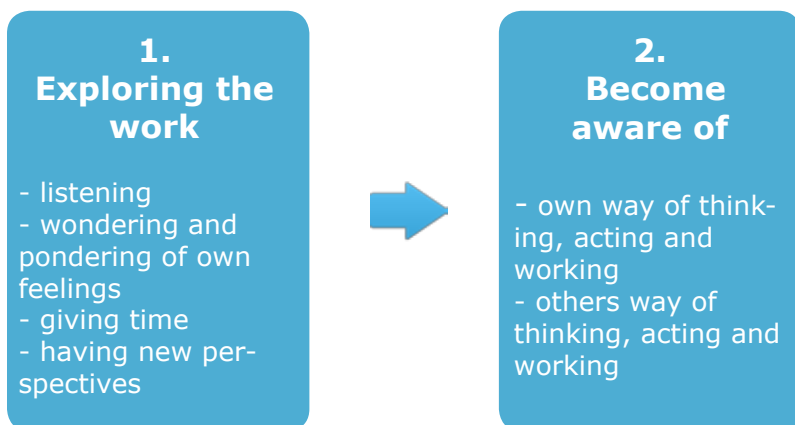




VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:

“Sustenance of motivation, ensuring the knowledge and taking care of assets are the main tools for managing volunteer work.” - This means that while we are coordinating every kind of volunteers, the main point is to support their own resources so they have energy and their will is to continue volunteer work. If we don't give enough support, volunteers may start to feel bored or exhausted and by that they might lose their motivation of volunteering.

Working with people with special needs can be grueling and hard sometimes. That's why it's certainly important to support volunteers who work in team which includes volunteers with disabilities. **Assisting tasks must not accumulate to the one volunteer; all working team must work with person with special needs together and help him/her when it's needed.**



People with disabilities

Then all the volunteers are able to focus also on their own volunteer work and by that fulfill their other tasks and obstacles as well.

Coordinators should be aware of the volunteers and how they feel about their work in multifunctional working team. It is important sometimes to stop and think about the work itself. How volunteer him/herself feel about his tasks and what he feels about working in the team. There is one very simple thing what too often we forget: speaking. It's the most powerful and easiest way to share experiences and find out how all the volunteers feel about volunteering. With these easy questions, coordinators can organize private conversations as a way to find out how volunteers feel:

3. Re-thinking

- constructive and critical comments
- proposals

4. Developing the work

- new ideas of working
- common activities of all team members

The most important thing is to remember that all volunteers are valuable, equal and special. We must give our time and attention equally to all of them so the results of the work are good as well. When all our volunteers have resources to support other volunteers with or without disabilities, our work is more affective and valuable and it's easier to reach our goals too. When all volunteers work as a close team, we can provide the best opportunities of the social inclusion to the people with disabilities as well.



Work must go on!

Viivi Setälä

As we already know, volunteering needs a lot other things than just a volunteer. Good induction to the work, work environment, clear and meaningful tasks and support from the workers are important points of view when we plan working with volunteers. Volunteering always depends about the given tasks, support and the motivation of the volunteer itself.

Normally when person start to apply for volunteering, the motivation is high and he/she is full of ideas and energy to make something new and different. It is natural way to start because volunteering is always something non-forced and what volunteer him/herself want to do. When new volunteers start their work, it is very important to give them clear understanding about the tasks, aims and goals what are going to be reached with volunteering. In the same time coordinators should keep in their mind that too strict rules are going to kill the motivation and excitement; that is the difficulty to work with volunteers because same time coordinators should give clear tasks but in the same time they should be ready for initiatives and new ideas what volunteers might have. It is logical that when volunteer can influence to the work, he will be more involved and by that more motivated as well.

It's not always easy to find a good volunteer. But even harder it is to keep up the motivation of the volunteer so he will continue the volunteering as long as possible, especially when we are talking about volunteering among people with disabilities. What can we do as coordinators, so volunteers wouldn't lose this energy and motivation what they have during the applying process?

We already talked about difficulties and challenges in working with people with disabilities and also how to support people with disabilities to be a volunteer. But still there is one specific way how to motivate any kind of volunteers and hold their energy up high; rewarding.

When we start to think about rewarding, first we should be able to split volunteering process into smaller pieces and objectives which can be reached little by little. There are two main types of volunteering:

1. "Time to time" volunteering: This type of work means that volunteers work in shifts, for example once in a week few hours. Volunteers can be rewarded according to the amount of shifts, for example every 10 shifts they gain some "prize" (for example a hat, key chain, movie night).

2. Continuous volunteering: This type of work means volunteer work in working place permanently with other workers and/or volunteers. For example EVS is this kind of volunteering, when volunteer stays in certain place during all the volunteering period. Rewarding can be done according to the time periods, which volunteer have spent (in quarters, in the middle etc.) or according to the tasks completed.

How to reward?

When we start think about rewarding, we must curb ourselves and not to think too big things. Volunteering is work done by person who wants to do it, not because person wants to be paid or rewarded. In this case rewarding is just a way to show that workers appreciate the work of volunteer and they want to support the volunteer to continue in the future as well.

Especially when we are talking about volunteering of people with disabilities, maybe the most simply way of rewarding is to have daily tasks and when they are done, give some small reward or remembering. For example 10 minutes coffee break and discussion with coordinator, singing karaoke or leaving from working place earlier are very easy examples. The most important thing



is to find out the interests of each volunteer and create ways of rewarding according to them.



VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:

In addition to everyday rewarding, coordinators should time to time organize some special activities. Recreational activities are very good and affective way to guarantee the assets of volunteers. Especially when these activities are done with all group of volunteers/working community, it can be very useful, affective and fun for the volunteers themselves and by that also for the quality of work. Recreational activities can be for example: eating in restaurant, bowling, paintball, camping, extreme sports, cooking, dancing... whatever comes to your mind. Once again it is very important to listen volunteers and whole working community, so you can create the best activities according to their wishes. The main thing is to think whole group and everyone's abilities, so all individuals can take a part of activities planned. When we are working with volunteers with disabilities, maybe the most important issue is to think that rewarding is done when the type and level of disability has been taken into consideration:

1. Physical performance: When volunteer has some kind of physical disability, the good example of rewarding is the activities where this person can forget his/her disability. What abilities the volunteer have, how we can support his/her participation according to abilities? Is there some special things what volunteer would like to do, but he/she doesn't have possibilities to do it by himself/ herself?

2. Psychological performance: Generally when we are working with people with mental disabilities it is important to have regular rhythm of working, when the planning of the work and schedules plays very important role. In this case, good way of rewarding is to reward immediately after (daily) tasks are done. It is impossible to give one advice how to reward, because this kind of people



People with disabilities

has so huge variety of interests. Main goal is to find these interests (hobbies, clothes, interests, books) and arrange rewards according to them.

3. Social performance: People for whom social situations produce challenges, logically the best way of rewarding might not be activities in big group. This kind of people should have change to spend time with coordinator and talk freely and without pressing about their thoughts, especially if the work is challenging because of working with other people. It is important to support these kind of people to recreational activities with working team as well, because that kind of extraordinary circumstances can be effective way to support them in social relations with other people.

Like mentioned before, it is important to remember that rewarding mustn't be exaggerated. When we are working with all kind of volunteers, we should take into consideration all their special features and possible disabilities, but in the same time treat them equally with other volunteers. It is not justified to provide better conditions for volunteering to the person with disabilities. Our task is to give special help and support so people with disabilities are also able to be volunteers as any other people. That means that in the same time every volunteer must have same reasons and conditions and reasons to be rewarded because of their volunteer work.

With remembering and small rewardings we can keep up the motivation of our volunteers. That's the way how we take care of our volunteers and show them how valuable they are.

Simple!

Rewarding volunteers in nutshell:

1. Focus on abilities
2. Find out the interests of individuals
3. Organize different kind of activities
4. Make a plan of rewarding
5. Be equal
6. Do not get too excited – rewarding is just a way to show your respect, it must not be the reason of volunteering itself





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VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:



Disabled Free Fest: summary of the project

Nowadays, one of the most common activities of NGOs, provided in social field is working with people with disabilities, helping them to develop social life and active living.

Our project idea is also aimed to meet with these objectives. The most difficult thing for young disabled people is to find a job and be useful part of our society. Lot of organizations and institutions are doing a lot in the area of professional and social education for people with special needs, but it is still a problem for them to find a job. Because for employability, just knowledge without practice is not enough, especially for people with fewer opportunities.

Our idea for social inclusion of youth with disabilities is to give them opportunity to learn new skills which could be useful in the future and give them a chance to practice their new knowledge and competences gained during volunteering.

During our large scale EVS project we organized experience exchange and cooperation between young people from different countries and with different social backgrounds by getting them involved as volunteers in the intercultural event called "Disabled Free Fest".

Aims of the project:

- To activate and organize the social inclusion of people with disabilities by involving them in active participation in social life as volunteers for cultural and sport events;
- To promote the value of volunteering among youth, especially youth with fewer opportunities;
- To support tolerance and share ideas about social equality, promote respect of others and cooperation in multicultural society of EU citizens and citizens from other countries.

Objectives:

- To organize the experience exchange and cooperation between young people from different countries and with different social background;
- To involve young people with disabilities in cooperation with other youth for organizing and participating in the intercultural event called "Disabled Free Fest";
- To create a video and Manual for promoting of volunteering, especially volunteering of people with disabilities.

Tasks:

- To teach young people in non-formal way, give them new skills and competences;



VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:

- To give them opportunity to work and be proud of the result of their work;
- To let them exchange the experience among young people from different countries and to establish future cooperation between them;
- To show example for society that people with disabilities could be useful and professional;
- To increase self-esteem and self-confidence of youth with disabilities;
- To promote volunteering as an opportunity for everyone;
- To be active and responsible part of society, to promote tolerance and better understanding among people from different cultures.

Project Phases:

1. Recruiting, selection and preparation of volunteers.

During the project we hosted 33 EVS volunteers from 11 different countries. Third part of them were people with fewer opportunities: youth with disabilities.

2. European Voluntary Service.

The duration of the EVS took one month (1 – 30 of October 2015), which was separated into four phases:

- Team building training for volunteers - get to know each other, information about project;
- Preparation of Festival event - developing skills for management, teamwork, time management and strategic planning;
- Implementation of Festival event;
- Evaluation of EVS with volunteers: filling Youthpasses and Volunteers' Reports.

3. Evaluation and dissemination of project outputs and results.

- Preparing the the Manual "VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion: people with disabilities".
- Organizing the follow up event: VED Forum (Volunteer Engagement of people with Disabilities) with the participation of local and International partners and ex-EVS volunteers.



Volunteers' tasks:

In beginning of EVS phase all volunteers were splitted into working groups according to their skills, competencies and expectations. Each group had a specific tasks.

Media Group:

- Preparing a working plan for the group with deadlines;
- Prepare press release about the project/festival;
- Develop an idea and creating the website of Festival and edit it during the project;
- Collect all video material so far and make promo video of Festival;
- Attend to different activities of other groups: take photos and videos, make articles (about volunteers, partners, methods and tools used etc.);
- Edit page in Facebook (everyday some message);
- Participate in classes in Adult Education Center.



Performance Group:

- Preparing a working plan for the group with deadlines;
- Collect a list of all volunteers who would like to make some performance during the Festival;
- Make rehearsal plan and agree this with all volunteers who will take a part of performances;
- Collect list of other artists for the Festival;
- Make performance programme;
- Make a list of the equipments and materials needed ;
- Participate in classes in Adult Education Center.



Technical Group:

- Make 'festival map' according to the venue' resources;
- Equip the venue according to the needs of visitors, especially with disabilities;
- Collect all necessary items for the Festival;
- Develop and prepare a concept of decoration for Festival area;
- Participate in classes in Adult Education Center.





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VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:



Sport Group:

- Prepare a working plan for the group with deadlines
- Prepare a sport programme for Festival for people with disabilities;
- Prepare equipments and areas for the activities;
- Participate in classes in Adult Education Center.



Creative Group:

- Prepare a workshop plan for the Festival;
- Participate in classes in Adult Education Center;
- Prepare a charity fair;
- Learn how to teach people to make handicrafts;
- Make list of materials needed.



People with disabilities

During the Festival were organized next activities:

- Scuba diving for people with disabilities (our divers were people with following disabilities: blindness, wheelchair, Down syndrome).
- Kite Show where volunteers got together with visitors who were flying kites. Kite was a symbol of our project, and we have very simple explanation of it:

Kite - as a person with disabilities: if have a special conditions (wind) and little support (holding rope) can be FREE (fly).

- Sport games: Football, Bocce, Mlkky, Darts.
- Handmade workshops.
- Concert which include the performances from each country where volunteers were from.
- Photo and picture exhibition.
- Yacht tour on a special equipped boat for people with disabilities.
- Planting trees in a garden of local Association of Didim and Its Region for Disabled People (DIYED).





Adaptive diving: experience of partners

Sinan Karabacılı & Sorayma Blouw

As the owners of OKENOS Scuba-diving school, we didn't think about including people with disabilities into our customer profile. It could have been plain ignorance and general blindness to this large group of people, enforced by the fact we run a business on a specific location in a holiday resort that is just not visited by people with disabilities. We literally don't see them.

We have been actively working since 2013 with special needs people in two markets; the Turkish and the European market. This fits our profile being Turkish and Dutch owners, but also because these are already our existing customer countries. It seems to be the best of both worlds, however it brings challenges in the way how we must put ourselves forward to the decision makers and how we approach the adaptive programs we initiate.

If we compare Europe to Turkey, we can safely say that in general in Europe it is more common that there are programs to integrate



Sinan Karabacılı
IAHD Open Water
Instructor/ Turkey



Well done is better than well said.

-Benjamin Franklin

People with disabilities

people with disabilities in daily life and the work force. There is an array of terminology to describe (or maybe even obscure) a condition or a group of people, and even the people that are in our target group behave in a different manner. When we deal with European participants, companies and NGO's, we can safely say the focus is always on inclusion, no barriers and equality.

Participating in Disabled Free Fest was a no-brainer for us. The goal of the project fits what we do within our No Limits & Adaptive Scuba Diving Turkey initiatives, and it was an opportunity for us to actively work with a mixed international group of (less abled) volunteers.

During the month long preparations we trained a group of volunteers to be certified as IAHD (International Association of Handicapped Divers) Surface Support Specialists that could knowledgeably and skillfully assist with the dives we were going to do during the festival day. This program was an excellent way to involve volunteers (with a disability) in the 'behind the scenes of scuba diving'. The benefits being that not only these people have now become the extra qualified hands that are so often needed when we do adaptive dives and programs, but also that they can offer help to a diver from a perspective we instructors -with all our working parts- will never be able to offer.

We were asked **"What would be a good way to support people with disabilities to be a volunteer?"**

Well, we think the answer is the same as "How to teach scuba diving to people with different needs"; 'un-see' their condition, and think how you can adjust your company/organization processes to have them function at the same or sometimes even higher level as others. Physical or mental condition of people is a permanent coat they wear. The general idea still seems to be that the coat has to come off in order to participate or integrate. But actually with some thought, preparation and sometimes extra tools we can easily adjust the conditions so it becomes unnoticeable or more comfortable for people to wear that coat during the tasks we set out.



Sorayma Blouw
IAHD Open Water
Instructor/ Holland



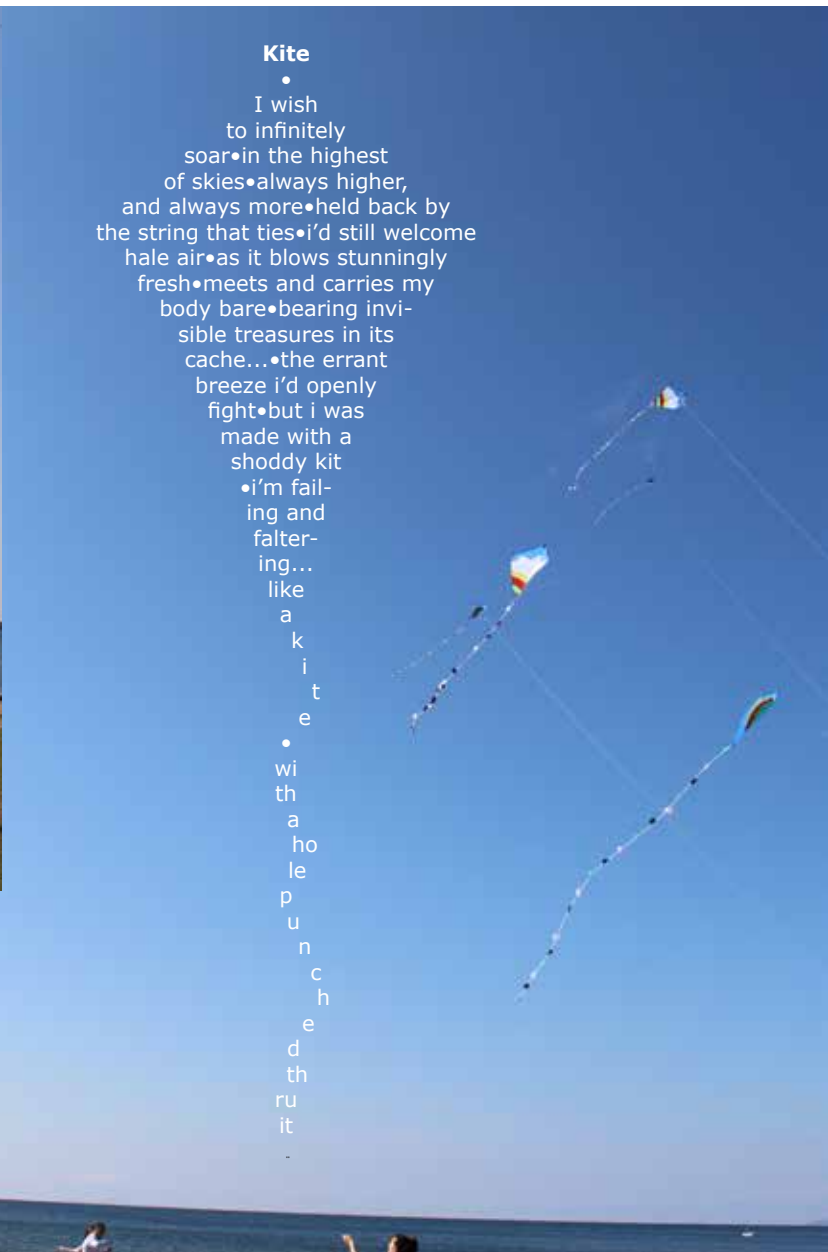


VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:

Disabled Free Festival in psychologist eyes

When I heard that there will be Disabled Free Festival I decided to join them with interest and curiosity. I had to see disabled people and young people from different cultures with different languages working together. I had to be a part of preparation different activities such as, kite flying.

As a woman who was born without both arms and one leg and as a psychologist these activities woke up curiosity inside of me. I think that it is important and necessary that disabled



Kite

•
 I wish
 to infinitely
 soar • in the highest
 of skies • always higher,
 and always more • held back by
 the string that ties • i'd still welcome
 hale air • as it blows stunningly
 fresh • meets and carries my
 body bare • bearing invi-
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 cache... • the errant
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 fight • but i was
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People with disabilities

people from different countries and societies work together and cooperate and that young people without disabilities spent some time together with them. The first thing which was prepared was activity which I never tried to do such as diving and flying kites. We learned that even if we don't speak same languages we understand each others looks and we understood that we share same feelings. We learned that together we can improve level of our life style and that the thing we thought we cant do actually we can do.

It is important to organize activities like this with disabled people from whole world and all societies to work together actively for changing this problem. This wasn't one of projects where disabled people are just invited to sit drink eat and be passive this was

project where disabled were included in implementation of it and they got chance to produce some new things.

This Disabled Free Fest became encourage model for other organizations. But to make a project like this need to prepare different games to play it, to make it more stronger it is not easy, it should be planed good. In this project i saw that ours differences shouldn't keep us far from each other it should show us how colorful we are. As child I was enviously looking at other kids playing with kites because i thought i cant do it. On Disabled Free Festival i did it for the first time. Friend from Bulgaria helped me and he was so excited because I felt so warmness in my heart. I took off my shoes and socks to stand on the rope and play with kite and then i felt that the child that was inside of me came out. On Disabled Free Festival we forget our disabilities and differences that we have.



Iknur Peder
Psychologist / Turkey





Best practice by local Volunteers in Didyma



Zeynep Emiroğlu
Founder President
of 1001 Love
Volunteers

How did the 1001 Love Volunteers came out?

The Association of Didim and its Region for Disabled People (DIYED) mentioned that there was three plans they couldn't afford to fulfill without assistance at the meeting, where press members were set on World Disabled Day on December 3th 2013. Three plans involved lift car, park and cafeteria for disabled people and also a building for DIYED. But all these demands required huge funds. This Association had helped many people so far and I promised to support it. I was a speaker at the meeting and I asked for participants to be volunteer for the Assosiation.

I was first volunteer and second one was my husband who was district governor. After my request I saw about 100 people coming to stage to be volunteer. That was so incredible moment.

That day I decided to call these people as 1001 Love Volunteers which gave the name to Project. And I declared the Project to public.

1001 Love Volunteers

After that day, we organised a program to inform people and make it clear how could it be volunteer and what would it bring us to be volunteer. I contacted the President of the Assosiation and worked with volunteers, who were also member of the Assosiation, patiently until the project ended. I also send special invitation to our seventy women volunteers herewith whole chain was completed. When we meet people at the program, I firstly present the Project and then express what we prospect for it. Expectations involved three donation which were volunteer's dues, grants and volunteer's support about project affairs. All these requirements costed 300.000. December, 17 we got 5.000 for the begining. By which we could create our website that volunteers was able to reach our activities broadcasted. Because it was the most important part of the Project to inform people who had never heard about it before. In this way the



Project would grow and widen like a tree. In the long run we planned activities expected to finish until World Disabled Day handled by the Assosiation. We made an analysis about costing, advertising businessmen for the Project and arranging meeting for volunteers. In the meantime we published all news and activities on the website. We contacted our volunteers living abroad through website and facebook. Beside this, we got in touch with Help In Hands Assosiation established by English volunteers in Didim. They promised to support us for prefabricated building of the Assosiation.



I was happy but not tired. The more I achieved our targets, the more I got excited for new ones. People who worked different sector were trying to collect new volunteers and get grant for the Project. DIMDER and DIMSAD which were musical community in Didim organised a concert and gave to charity. The President of the Assosiation took care of all affairs about fundrise for lift car which we could carry disabled people. At the end we managed to buy it from Bursa. All gas spendings of car and driver's cost financed by the Municipality of Didim.



The Municipality also supported all infrastructure affairs of disabled park and contributed to construct it. When park finished, it was named 1001 Love Volunteers and all volunteers' name was written on the board of park. We planted flowers around park on our own fair hands. Park also contained a game area where children with disabilities can play. English volunteers worked for Help In Hand Assosiation collected necessary money to construct a prefabricated building and we managed to build it. When it finished, we had a living space including cafeteria where we spend time comfortably. We took official ownership of the building under favour of the Provincial Special Administration of Aydın which donated 50.000 cash money. On the other hand, the Governorship of Aydın heard about our Project and support to interior decoration of building. We did not have a need to loan money for interior decoration. After six months work we finished it.



Now number of registered volunteers is around 660, there are so many non-registered volunteers in this project. On the day of grand opening on June,7th 2014, Erol Ayyıldız, governor of Aydın, graced us with his presence and we gave plaques to all volunteers.

It has been for years since all works completed. Whenever I go to Didim, I visit park and feel peace drinking my tea.

Translated by:
F.Sevgi SESLİ



VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:

Foreign partners



Projekte Vullnetare Nderkombetare/ Tirana, Albania

It is an organization that promotes peace through voluntary work and exchanges volunteers all over the world.

www.pvnalbania.org / pvnoutgoing@gmail.com



"Centre for Informational Support of Civic Initiatives "The Third Sector" / Hrodna, Belarus

Preserving and creating!

On the basis of Belarusian national values we develop social activeness among different groups of citizens through informational and educational support for democratic public initiatives.

www.3sektar.by / 3sektaryia@gmail.com



Cultural Center 20:19 / Sofia, Bulgaria

The cultural center promotes all kinds of art including music, theatre, multimedia and poetry. The organizations also stands for promoting the culture of the minorities living in the country along with their rights and freedom of speech through art.

my.culture2019@gmail.com



INVOLVED NGO / Tallin, Estonia

YOUR POSSIBILITIES TO GET INVOLVED

www.involved.ee / info@involved.ee



Student-Youth Council / Ozurgeti, Georgia

Is a public union, which aims at solving the problems that youth and students are facing by protecting their rights, promoting knowledge and skills, filling informational gap, realizing youth's intellectual, creative, cultural and sport potentials.

www.syc.ge / syc_guria@yahoo.com



CESIE / Palermo, Italy

CESIE links local, national and international contexts and is committed to stimulate development and change in cultural, educational and economic spheres through the creation and use of innovative tools and methods.

www.cesie.org / mobility@cesie.org

People with disabilities

ADVIT "Europe without Borders" / Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

started by and for young people, to involve Moldovan young people, with and without professional experience, into programmes at national and international levels in the fields of education, culture, ecology, historical heritage protection and helping disadvantaged people, by contributing to the development of a more peaceful society, to the decrease of social injustice.
www.voluntariat.md / sending.advit@gmail.com



PSOUU - Polish Association for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities Gdansk Branch/ Gdańsk, Poland

Association works for and represents individuals with developmental disability since birth (children, teenagers and adults) and their families, whose disability requires support for their entire life.

www.psouu.gda.pl / psouu_biuro@op.pl



POLSKIE
STOWARZYSZENIE
NA RZECZ OSÓB
Z UPOŚLEDZIENIEM
UMYSŁOWYM
KOŁO W GDAŃSKU

Asociația Tinerii 3D / Craiova, Romania

We are a group of young who is fighting for respecting the right of the young people in the community, for social integration and support of the youngsters that focuses on disadvant below to disadvantage social groups and also to develop a healthy way of life in 3Directions: education for the mind, culture for the soul and sport for the body.

www.t3d.ro / adrian@t3d.ro



t3d
The Association of 3D Youngsters
Culture Education Sport

Asociación Mundus – Un Mundo a tus Pies / Barcelona, Spain

The Association begins his journey with the goals of implementing projects which facilitate the contact between cultures and with the idea of promoting a more inclusive and egalitarian society, it aims to give opportunities to young Catalans and Europeans to develop themselves, and learn through non-formal education.

www.asociacionmundus.com /
alberto.unmundoatuspies@gmail.com



Mundus - Un mundo a tus pies

Projektor Idell Förening / Kronoberg, Sweden

Funkibator is a non-profit organisation that works regionally in Kronobergs county in Southern Sweden. Funkibator is a part of the SIP network. We work with children, adolescents and young adults with disabilities.

www.sip.se / info@globalakronoberg.se





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VOLUNTEERING for Social Inclusion:

Local partners:



Turkish National Agency
www.ua.gov.tr



**Ministry of Family and Social Policies of Turkey/
Sport Club**
www.aile.gov.tr



Municipality of Didyma
www.didim.bel.tr



Didyma Center of Education for Adults
www.didimhem.meb.gov.tr



**Association for People with Disabilities
in the Region of Didyma**
www.didimengellilerdernegi.com



Okenos Scuba School
www.okenosadventure.com/nolimits/



International Association Handicapped Divers
www.adaptivescubadivingturkey.com



**Well-abled Yacht:
Vessels with Infrastructure Designed for the disabled**
www.wellabled.com

Project outputs:

The website of the Project Disable Free Fest:

<https://freefestdidim.wordpress.com>

The page in Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/Disabled-Free-Festival-431722067034980/?fref=ts>

The page in YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHmvP8rZK-30KLRMUm1zWUQw>

● **Promo Video 1:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=03OSxpTdRIs>

● **Promo Video 2:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOn5B8HsoiA>

● **Promo Video 3:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyrwZVC8-6w>

● **“Choose Volunteering” Video:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0kOeLqp83-4>

Resources:

Access to Volunteering Fund Case Studies:

<http://www.volunteering.org.uk/component/gpb/disabled-people>

Does volunteering improve employability?

Evidence from the British Household Panel Survey

Angela Ellis Paine, Stephen McKay and Domenico Moro:

July 2013:

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/generic/tsrc/documents/tsrc/working-papers/working-paper-100.pdf>

Erasmus+ Programme Guide: Version 3 (2015): 14/11/2014

Exchange Program for Volunteers with Disabilities:

http://www.bezev.de/fileadmin/Neuer_Ordner/Inklusiver_FD/Dokumentationen/DPI_ASIA_Bezev.pdf

Pathways to Social Inclusion through Volunteering July 2011/

http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/files_mf/1376976696VAPolicySubmissionOctober2011PathwaystoSocialInclusionthroughVolunteeringDiscussionPaper.pdf

Recruiting, Retaining and Developing Disabled Volunteers Guidance for Volunteer Opportunity Providers

Stepping Forward: Including Volunteers with Intellectual Disabilities: Guide Kelly Robinson and Barb Fanning:

http://sectorsource.ca/sites/default/files/resources/files/pei_guide_steppingforward.pdf

Volunteering for Everyone: A guide for organisations who want to include and recruit volunteers who have a learning disability:

<http://www.volunteering.org.uk/component/gpb/disabled-people>

Volunteering: a valuable pathway to employability:

https://www.ncvo.org.uk/images/documents/practical_support/volunteering/vsc-policy-final.pdf

Volunteers with Disabilities: What You Need to Know:

<http://www.ala.org/ascla/asclaprotocols/accessibilitytipsheets/volunteers>

<http://hellopoetry.com/words/9948/kites/poems/>



With special thanks to European Commission!...

Gürkan AKCAER
LEAR of S&G



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FEST

System & Generation Association
Necatibey Cd. No: 19/21, Çankaya
06430, Ankara - Turkey
Tel/Fax: +90 312 230 5341
evswithsystemandgeneration@gmail.com
www.systemandgeneration.eu