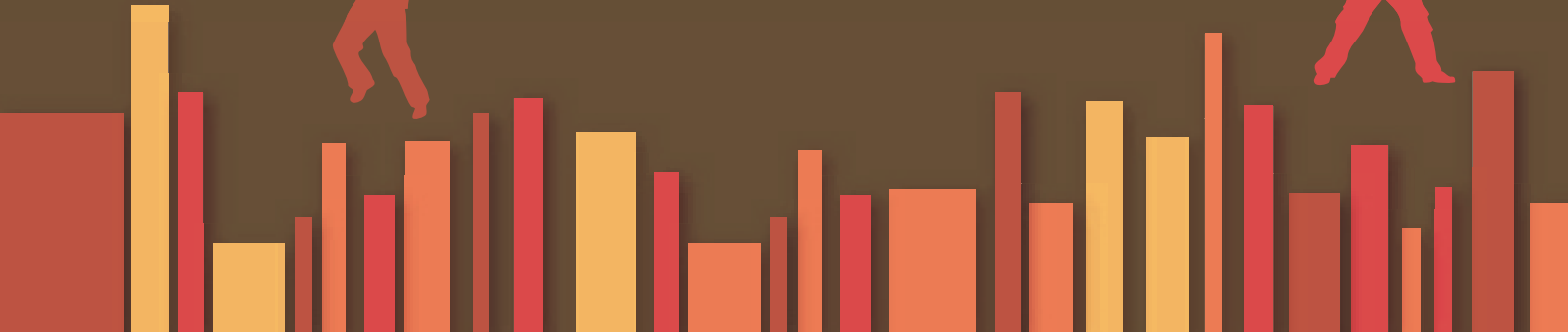


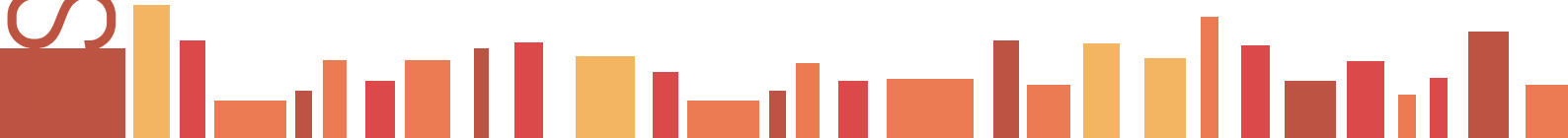
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FRIENDSHIP FRIENDSHIP TEAM



# EVS MANUAL



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## ABOUT THE EVS MANUAL

This European Voluntary Service (EVS) manual was written with the intention of offering a hands-on guide to start working with EVS. Our target group is KEKS members, youngsters interested to become volunteers through the EVS programme and community centres that have not yet participated in or have begun to work with international programs. We focus on unemployed youth, minority youth, and young people with fewer opportunities as well as young people in general.

The EVS manual is an instrument to be used during the "EVS Inspiration Tour". The aim of the "EVS Inspiration Tour" is both to inform and to spread the results of the EVS projects "Meet in Youth Realities 1-4" carried out in KEKS network between 2009-2012. What we want with the "EVS Inspiration Tour" is to stimulate the interest about the Youth in Action programme (Ung och Aktiv i Europa).

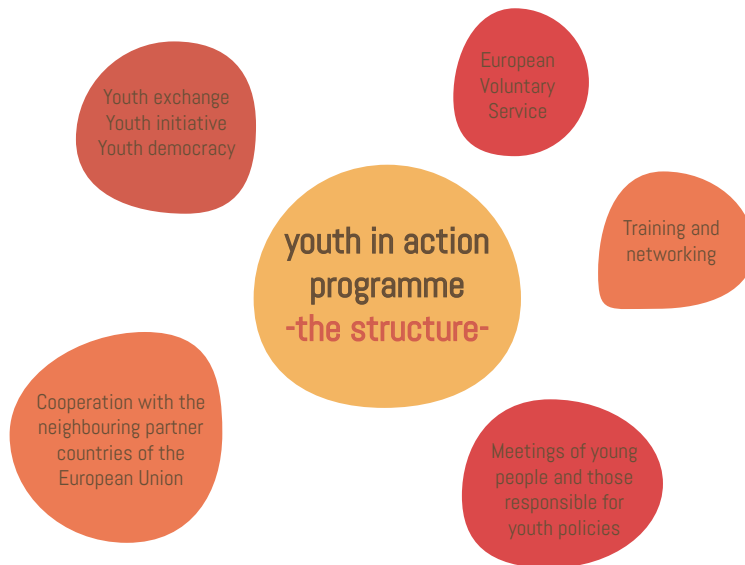
The manual was created by the EVS volunteers working in KEKS/Eurodesk Youth Centre with the support and help of their mentor – Sara Lesch, and it represents their and KEKS views, experience and recommendations.

Andreea Mariş and Akaki Jamburia  
Möndal November 2011

## I. YOUTH IN ACTION AND THE EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE PROGRAMME

Youth in Action (YiA) is the Programme the European Union has set up for young people. It aims to inspire a sense of active European citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young Europeans and to involve them in shaping the Union's future. It promotes mobility within and beyond the EU's borders, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue, and encourages the employability and inclusion of all young people, regardless of their educational, social and cultural background: **Youth in Action is a Programme for all!**

EVS is part of the Youth in Action programme and the European Commission finances it. In Sweden, Ungdomsstyrelsen manages the Youth in Action programme. 25 million SEK are given to Sweden every year for the Youth in Action programme.



## Who can participate in the Youth in Action Programme?

Are you a young person aged between 13 and 30 years old or somebody active in youth work or youth organisations legally resident in one of the Programme or Partner Countries? If so, you can be a participant of a Youth in Action project and of course, in the European Voluntary Service.

Young people with fewer opportunities can also participate in the programme.

“**Young people with fewer opportunities**” are young people that are at a disadvantage compared to their peers because they face one or more of the situations and obstacles mentioned below. In certain contexts, these situations/obstacles prevent young people from having effective access to formal and non-formal education, transnational mobility and from participation, active citizenship, empowerment and inclusion in society at large.

### The categories of fewer opportunities are:

- **Social obstacles:** young people facing discrimination (because of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability etc.), young people with limited social skills or anti-social or risky sexual behaviors, young people in a precarious situation, (ex-)offenders, (ex-)drug or alcohol abusers, young and/or single parents, orphans, young people from broken families etc.
- **Economic obstacles:** young people with a low standard of living, low income, dependence on social welfare system, long-term unemployment, homelessness, poverty, young people in debt or with financial problems etc.

- **Disability:** young people with mental (intellectual, cognitive, learning), physical, sensory or other disabilities.
- **Educational difficulties:** young people with learning difficulties, early school-leavers and school dropouts, lower qualified persons, young people with poor school performance etc.
- **Cultural differences:** young immigrants or refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families, young people belonging to a national or ethnic minority, young people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion problems etc.
- **Health problems:** young people with chronic health problems, severe illnesses or psychiatric conditions, young people with mental health problems etc.
- **Geographical obstacles:** young people from remote or rural areas, young people living on small islands or peripheral regions, young people from urban problem zones, young people from less serviced areas (limited public transport, poor facilities, abandoned villages...) etc.



## II. INFORMATION ABOUT THE EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE

The European Voluntary Service enables young people to carry out voluntary service for up to 12 months in a country other than their country of residence. Its aim is to develop solidarity and promote active citizenship and mutual understanding among young people. Beyond benefiting local communities, volunteers learn new skills and languages, and discover other cultures. Non-formal learning principles and practice are reflected throughout the project.

**Youthpass** – is a tool for participants of projects funded by the Youth in Action Programme to describe what they have done and to show what they have learnt.

Youthpass Certificates are available for European Voluntary Service, Youth Exchanges, Training Courses and for Youth Initiatives.

An EVS project can focus on a variety of themes and areas, such as culture, youth, sports, social care, cultural heritage, arts, civil protection, environment, development cooperation etc. High-risk interventions in immediate post-crisis situations (humanitarian aid, immediate disaster relief etc.) are excluded.

## EVS is free of charge for any young person and it covers:

- International travel and visa costs.
- AXA life insurance.
- Accommodation and food.
- Local transport.
- Monthly pocket money.
- Language course.
- Training opportunities (on-arrival, mid-term training and ex-volunteers weekend).
- Youth pass certificate at the end of the EVS stage.

## What EVS is not

- Occasional, unstructured, part-time volunteering.
- An internship in an enterprise.
- A paid job, it must not replace paid jobs.
- A holiday or tourist activity.
- A language course.
- Exploitation of cheap workforce.
- A period of study or vocational training abroad.

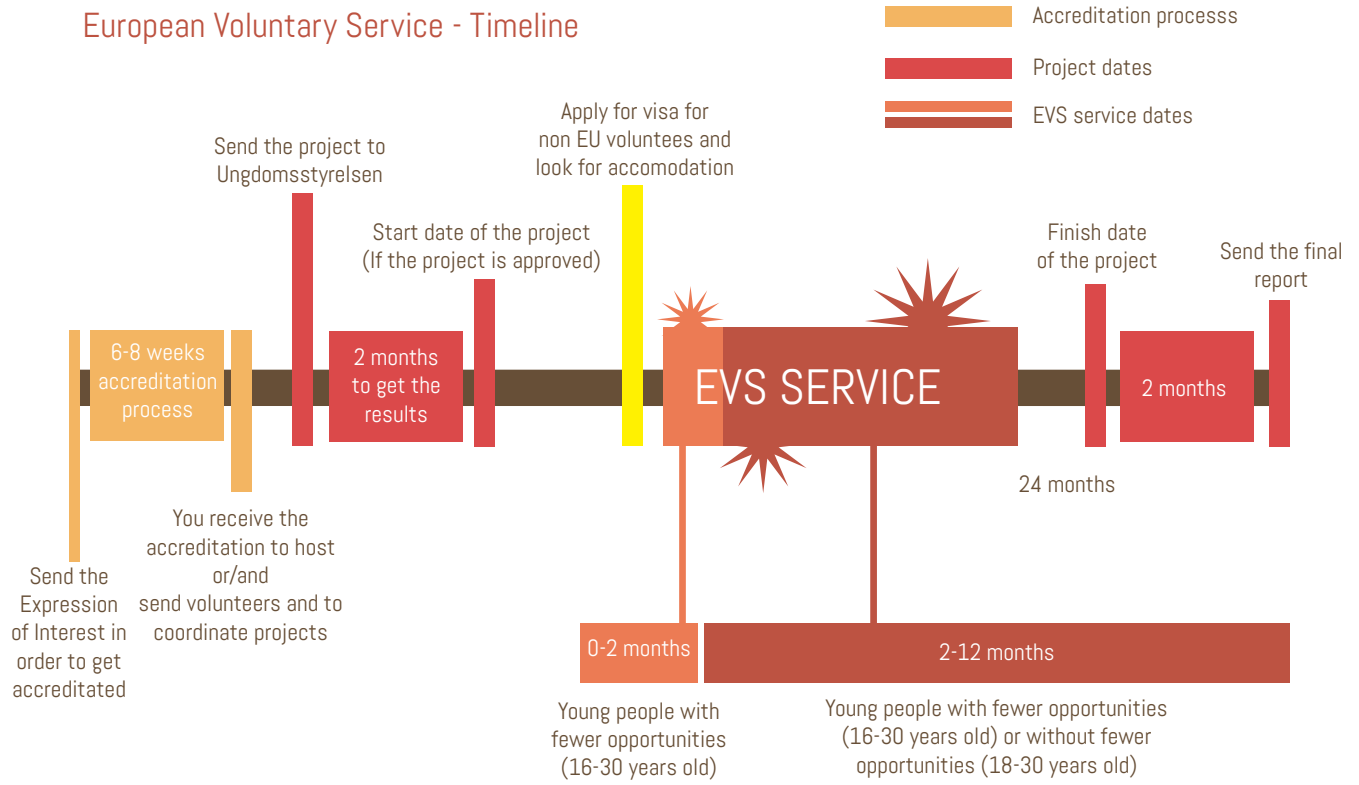


## Who can become a volunteer?

- Young people aged between 16/18 and 30, legally resident in the country of the Sending Organisation.
- Volunteers are selected regardless of their background (sexual or religious orientation or ethnical background).
- Volunteers with fewer opportunities can participate from the age of 16.
- Volunteers may be identified after the application has been submitted (it is recommended to select the volunteers before the project is submitted as in this way you can add extra costs in the budget if needed like costs for disabled people).
- A volunteer can take part in only one EVS project. Exception: volunteers who have carried out an EVS lasting maximum 2 months can take part in an additional EVS project provided that the total duration of the combined periods of Service does not exceed 12 months.



# European Voluntary Service - Timeline



### III. BENEFITS OF EVS SEEN THROUGH OUR EVS PROJECTS SO FAR

#### Benefits of EVS for organisations

- More international contacts and opportunities of international cooperation.
- Giving the chance to the young people in the youth centres to gain international experience, develop their tolerance and sense of solidarity and to widen their horizons.
- More exciting and stimulating elements in the daily work for the staff.
- Acquire experience in managing projects and coordinating volunteers.
- Have more experience, as an organisation/youth centre, in managing international projects (useful when you apply for youth exchanges, training courses, study visits).
- Develop the language skills and abilities for all the staff.
- New intercultural perspectives and experiences.
- Possibility to respond better to the young people's needs by hosting a volunteer with specific skills that the staff might not have (for example theatre and dance).
- Improving the language skills of the staff and as well of the young people attending the youth centre's activities.



## Comments about having a volunteer from KEKS mentors and staff

*“Our volunteer has affected the youth centre and the staff in a positive way. She has helped us to get clear tools and procedures in order to work on gender issues in our activities. She helped to create an awareness among young people to demand their rights and to challenge how adults respond to boys / girls, which is invaluable for our development.”*

*“New project ideas, such as soccer exchange and break activities attracted more children to the youth centre. The young people got insight into a new culture. Everything went very well! He was the perfect volunteer for the centre.”*

*“The volunteer have made the staff very positive toward EVS. Therefore, we now have a new volunteer who is here for a year. The staff have been affected in a positive sense and feel that just getting to communicate in another language is enriching. Also we as staff have become more aware of another culture which feels very exciting.”*

*“It is difficult to measure the staff feel that some prejudices and attitudes toward Arabs and Muslims have been broken down thanks to our volunteer. The youth suddenly had a real frame of reference – A young Muslim boy who likes death metal, is awesome playing guitar and live a life not unlike theirs! Our volunteer was open and happy to discuss any issues and his openness made it possible to ask questions and discuss xenophobia. This also led to more natural discussion about insulting, racism etc. among staff and young people.”*

## Benefits of EVS for young people when asking KEKS volunteers

- Develop their English language abilities and acquire new language skills in the new country.
- Learn about other cultures and overcome stereotypes.
- Become more aware of what is happening outside their country in a European perspective.
- Become more tolerant by sharing accommodation with an international group of volunteers.
- Understanding the way different systems function (organisations, social system etc.).
- Meet new people and tie new friendships.
- Learn to work after a schedule and organizing your life.
- Travel in the hosting country and maybe around it as well.
- Participating in different training courses.
- Learn for free! Acquiring new skills and knowledge without having to pay for it (learning by doing).
- Important experience that can be mentioned further in the CV.
- Increased possibilities to find a job.
- Learn about yourself, your limits and your boundaries.



- Learn how to manage and overcome different difficult situations.
- Learn to be a team player, an equal in a group of people working together.
- Opportunity to get creative and have input in your work place.
- Have intergenerational contact (in case you work with people of different ages with whom you normally don't socialize).
- Have lots of fun!



## IV. WHICH ARE THE FIRST STEPS IF WE WANT TO HOST VOLUNTEERS?

First you must have an EVS-accreditation. This serves to gain access to EVS and to ensure quality standards for the volunteer.

To be accredited, your organisation must submit an Expression of Interest form (EI) describing the general motivation and ideas for the EVS activities. The same promoter may request one or more types of accreditation as Sending organisation (SO), Host organisation (HO), or Coordinating Organisation (CO). Expression of Interest forms can be submitted at any time (no deadline).

To be able to send an application to host volunteers you must be a CO.



The Expression of Interest should be submitted at least 6-8 weeks before the submission of the EVS project application. The accreditation process is carried out by the National Youth Board (Ungdomsstyrelsen).

Once accredited your organisation and your EVS project is shown on the EVS-database for all EVS-projects in the European Union. This is also where the young potential volunteers can search for interesting projects and apply for them.

## V. EVS IN DETAIL FOR HOSTING ORGANISATIONS WITHIN KEKS

### Accreditation phase

- In order to host a volunteer you must first be accredited. Complete the Expression of Interest to become an accredited organisation and send it to the National agency, in Sweden Ungdomsstyrelsen through UAS (Ungdomsstyrelsens Ansökningsystem); [http://www3.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/uas/AppFormPreview\\_p24\\_f1\\_p.do](http://www3.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/uas/AppFormPreview_p24_f1_p.do). The accreditation must be written in English and it is valid for a maximum of 3 years. Another Expression of Interest must be sent if you want to continue with EVS. Note that it takes 6-8 weeks to get your accreditation!

### Selection phase

- Write a short project description that should contain the volunteer work duties etc. and KEKS international unit makes an open call for international volunteers according to your needs on Eurodesk.
- Select a volunteer from the different applications received.
- Interviews should be made by phone/skype with chosen volunteer candidates. Interviews should contain discussions on the motivation of the volunteer to work in the HO. Interviews should also include any ideas and input from the volunteer to the project and this can be included in the project application as well as the Activity agreement/EVS Contract.



- Involve the youngsters from your Youth Centre in the selection of the volunteer. This can be the key for a good EVS project and increased participation on the youngsters from your Fritidsgård/ Organization.

### Application phase

- Support can be given in “application writing workshops” well in time for the application to be submitted, in the Eurodesk Youth centre in Mölndal, in the continuation of EVS inspiration Tour or by email/phone support.
- Answer received within 2 months of the application deadline.

### Practical preparation phase

- Host organisation takes care of visa invitation with support from KEKS. If the volunteer is from a non-EU country he/she needs visa and you will have to send an embassy invitation by fax so the volunteer can apply for visa as soon as possible. Check with the SO to which embassy/consulate to send the invitation. In order to avoid project delay it is better to start visa preparation at least 2-3 months before the arrival. Have in mind the country where the volunteer will apply for visa as you might need to add extra money in the budget for “visa travel” (if he/she applies for visa in another country than his/her own). Be sure that you have followed the regulations for the visa process.
- Contact the SO to book the international travel.
- Look for a room in a shared apartment or house, where the volunteer can be accommodated during his/her EVS.

- Find the best solution for the food supply (monthly allowance, canteen access etc.).
- Remember that the volunteer should not pay for the local transport. Find the best solution in regards with your location and possibilities (monthly travel card, bike etc.).
- Be sure that you give the volunteer his/her pocket money every month.
- Find the best solution for the language course (classes in school or University, paid course, teaching on a volunteer basis, SFI etc.).
- Besides a supervisor, the volunteer should have also a mentor outside the work life. For example students about the same age or ex-volunteers.
- Complete the Activity Agreement (EVS Contract) and sign it in 5 copies; by the volunteer, the sending, hosting and the coordinating organisations). One copy of the AA should be sent to Ungdomsstyrelsen with at least 6 weeks before the EVS starts.
- Host organisation sends “Health & security form” to selected volunteers and also require a passport copy for the booking of the travel.

### Contact making phase

- The host organisation (HO) takes contact with the volunteer and can answer all practical questions the volunteer might have.



- The volunteer sends a self presentation to the HO.
- The mentor of the volunteer makes sure to prepare for the volunteers arrival, with colleagues, managers and the visitors in the youth centres or activities of the HO.

### After the volunteer arrives

- Introduce the volunteer to the organisation and the other staff/volunteers.
- The supervisor should work beside the volunteers as the first period is crucial for connecting the volunteer to the work place and to the youngsters.
- The mentor should have weekly meetings containing questions about the work and the project, colleagues, work environment, social life and how well the volunteer is adapting, expectations on the mentor and how well the mentor and volunteer are cooperating, constant improvements to be made in the project as a whole etc.
- Set up a working schedule in cooperation with the volunteer.
- Help the volunteer to create an “Action Plan” for the work duties keeping the



creative input of the volunteer in mind. This can be used as a guide through the entire EVS period. The “Action Plan” should contain information about what the volunteer plans to do during his/her EVS and even personal learning objectives of the volunteer. The “Action plan” should be made in cooperation with the volunteer and should be flexible so that new ideas and creative turns of the project can be included. Have in mind that the EVS is not a job position.

- Sign up the volunteers for training courses in Stockholm (on-arrival training and mid-term training).
- Make sure that the volunteer completes his/her Youth pass certificate. Youth pass is a tool for participants of projects funded by the Youth in Action Programme to describe what they have done and to show what they have learned. Youth pass is an instrument for recognizing non-formal education and can be used in the CV for example in job search.
- Make sure that the volunteer completes a mid-term and a final evaluation. The two evaluations can be used in the final report for the whole project. The volunteer also should write a short “Volunteers report” for Ungdomsstyrelsen.
- The HO/CO writes the final report to Ungdomsstyrelsen including financial part.



## What is an EVS-supervisor (handledare)?

- The supervisor is the person responsible for giving tasks for the volunteer and observe his/her work and support him/her when needed.
- The day to day support of the supervisor is crucial especially in the first time period.
- The supervisor monitors the volunteer's work during the weekly mentor meetings.
- The supervisor will coach the volunteer to reflect upon the learning objectives and the development of the Youthpass. The supervisor and volunteer regularly discuss whether the work can be developed and/or extended depending on the volunteer's ideas, needs and wishes.
- The volunteer is seen as a valuable asset in the working group and his/her opinions and ideas are taken seriously by the whole staff.
- The supervisor encourages potential collaborations between volunteers/activities prior to and outside the municipal boundaries to the extent possible.
- The supervisor and the volunteer, have a common responsibility to continuously ensure that the EVS project is visible and the results are disseminated in the local community.
- The supervisor and the volunteer have a joint responsibility to continuously document the project with photos and possibly video.

## What is a mentor?

- The mentor is a person from outside the organisation who offers personal support through the process of adapting to a new country and culture.
- The mentor can regularly meet the volunteer (for example once a week) and discuss with him/her the way in which he/she feels and what he/she needs.
- The mentor can help the volunteer to integrate in the local community by putting him/her in contact with different groups of people, organisations etc.
- The mentor can take the volunteer to different parties, leisure time activities, bar, pubs, he/she can show him the city etc.



## VI. EVS IN DETAIL FOR SENDING ORGANISATIONS WITHIN KEKS

I have a young person who want to go on a EVS- what should do!?

- In order to send a volunteer abroad you must first be accredited as a sending organisation or coordinating organisation. Complete the Expression of Interest in order to become an accredited organisation and send it to the National agency, in Sweden Ungdomsstyrelsen through UAS (Ungdomsstyrelsen Ansökningsystem);

[http://www3.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/uas/AppFormPreview\\_p24\\_f1\\_p.do](http://www3.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/uas/AppFormPreview_p24_f1_p.do)

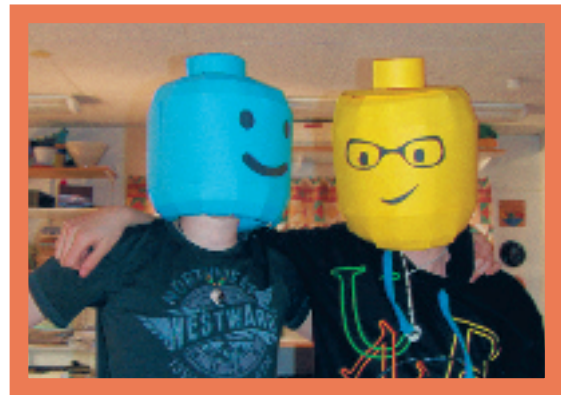
- The accreditation must be completed in English and it is valid for a maximum of 3 years. After maximum 3 years, another Expression of Interest must be sent if you want to continue with EVS. Note that it takes 6-8 weeks to get your accreditation!
- Support the volunteer to search for an interesting project using the EVS database of accredited organisations:

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/evs/aod/hei\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/evs/aod/hei_en.cfm)

- Support the volunteer to contact the host organisation and send them: a motivation letter, a picture and a CV in the Europass format. Here you can access it:

<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/vernav/Europass+Documents/Europass+CV.csp>

- The Hosting Organisation is in charge for selecting the young person most fitted for a certain project and they hopefully choose your candidate!
- You as sending organisation must now become partner with the host organisation, in order to send your volunteer, by submitting the partner agreement (part III) for their application to their NA.
- If the project is already approved you become partner by signing the Activity agreement together with the volunteer and at the same time give full information to the volunteer related with his/her responsibilities as an EVS volunteer which is always written in the AA.
- During the preparation phase you must now help the young person getting ready for his/her EVS and should meet and talk about cultural differences and working and living in a different environment, hopes and fears, practical issues as accommodation, AXA-insurance, Youth pass etc.
- You will also make practical arrangements such as contacting the hosting and the coordinating organisation in order to book the volunteer's international transport.
- You, as Sending Organisation, will keep in contact with the volunteer on the whole duration of the EVS and will offer to the volunteer all the support needed.
- You as Sending Organisation will receive the Sending Activity Costs (480 €/per sent volunteer). Be prepared to write a small report to explain which support you have offered to the EVS volunteer.





## VII. EVS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

I am a young person who want to go on a EVS- what to do?!

- Find a sending organisation in your city by looking in the EVS-database.
- Be aware of the tough competition and take time to write a good Motivation Letter + CV.
- Do not write a general application and send to many organisations at them same time! But change the application each time so that the organisation can see that you are specifically interested in their project.
- Do not send more than 1 photo.
- You should write what skills you have, hobbies and/or any special interests, if you are active in an organisation or other activities that can appeal to the HO.
- Call or email and talk yourself to the organisation and ask if there are available volunteer places.
- You may have to apply for several projects before you get accepted.
- The projects listed on the top in the EVS-database are the newest ones but others can also be active.
- If you are only interested in getting out of your country as fast as possible - or basically just want to go on a vacation - EVS is not for you right now!



## VIII. USUAL QUESTIONS ASKED BY POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS

I want to go to X country but I don't know the language, how can I manage?

You can go as a volunteer in a country without knowing the language spoken there. Most of the volunteers don't speak the language of the country where they will go but they do manage to communicate by using English, translators, dictionaries and very much body language. During your EVS period you will have the chance to participate in a language course and depending on your interest, intensity and duration of the language course you will also be able to communicate in a new language.

How much does it cost? I can't afford the flight ticket?

It doesn't cost anything! EVS is free! All the costs related with your accommodation, food, local transport, insurance, language course and international travel are covered by the EVS programme. In most cases your flight ticket is bought by the sending, hosting or coordinating organisation so you won't have to pay any money.

How much money do I earn?

Beside the food money, every volunteer is entitled to receive monthly pocket money. The pocket money differs from country to country. Here are some of the countries and the sum you will receive: Austria 110€, Belgium 105€, Croatia 60€, Greece 95€, Italy 115€, Romania 60€, Sweden 115€, United Kingdom 150€.

### I have never been outside my country or away from my family, how will I manage?

EVS is a learning opportunity and it is a great way of trying your own wings and learn to be independent, see new cultures and meet new people. By being away from home you will experience new things and learn how to deal with situations outside your safe country and this will make you grow as a person in a way that you will benefit from the rest of your life.

### I am very interested in working in an animal shelter, but I don't have the education?

You do not need to have a special education to be able to go in an EVS. What you need is an interest in the project you want to participate. Sometimes the organisations that host volunteers also organize different training for the new arrived volunteers. This could be a chance for you to learn more about the topic of your interest.

### What if I am very unhappy in the new country and there is a lot of time left on my EVS?

If you are very unhappy you must directly tell your supervisor, the coordinator and the sending organisation. Together you will try to find the reason and solve the situation. Maybe you want to change the work duties for example and this must be communicated. Your host organisation will help you and act as your support if needed, so you are never alone. Almost all crises can be solved if talked about. If there is no solution you can together with all different parties decide to end the project. This will have to be done according to a certain procedure but is of course possible.

## Christmas is very important for me and I can't stand being away for Christmas?

In EVS you will earn 2 days of vacation for every month, this means you can save them for example until Christmas and travel home for a longer period of time.

## How will I be able to live with other volunteers for 1 year?

The volunteers can be accommodated in different living places. Sometimes you might have to share a house, an apartment or you might live alone. In case you will have to share your accommodation you have to set clear rules regarding the common living space (cleaning, not making too much noise etc.).

Sharing accommodation can sometimes be difficult especially for the ones that never did it before. Nevertheless it is a new experience that might train your tolerance, communication and even conflict resolution skills.



I have not finished my degree and I quit school, how will I ever be accepted as a volunteer?

Educational background is not a criterion for selection in the EVS projects. You can apply and be selected even though you quit school. Youngsters who quit school are included in the category of people with fewer opportunities and are a priority within the Youth in Action programme.

I don't have a Swedish citizenship but I have a legal residence, can I still become a volunteer?

Yes. You can be a volunteer even though you do not have the Swedish citizenship. In order to participate in the programme you need to be a legal resident in Sweden.

I am in a wheelchair, is EVS for me?

EVS programme accentuates the importance of people with fewer opportunities participating in EVS projects. There are many projects involving youngsters with fewer opportunities (including the ones in wheelchairs). The organisation can apply for extra costs for support or for an assistant. Youngsters with disabilities are included in the category of people with fewer opportunities and are a priority within the Youth in Action programme.

### What if I dislike my supervisor and we can't get a long?

You will receive all the necessary support from the hosting and the coordinating organisation to try to end the conflict between you and your supervisor. If the conflict continues you can receive another supervisor.

### What if I dislike my work duties and can't stand it anymore?

Talk to your supervisor. Let him/her know that what you are doing doesn't stimulate, interest or help you. Together you can find alternative activities that you will like. A good way for making sure you will like the project's activities is to check the project description before applying. Make sure that it is a topic that is interesting and stimulating for you.



### I only want to go on EVS for 1 month in the summer, can I?

Yes. There are two types of EVS projects: short-term projects and long-term projects. The short-term projects have a duration of maximum 2 months while the long-term projects take between 2 and 12 months.

## IX. EVS IN DETAILS FOR COORDINATING ORGANISATIONS

- The coordinating organisation can also be the sending or the hosting organisation.
- The coordinating organisation writes the application and carries the financial and administrative responsibility for the entire project towards the National Agency (Ungdomsstyrelsen).
- Coordinates the project in cooperation with the Sending and Hosting Organisation (HO).
- Distributes the EVS grant between the partners and the volunteer in order to assure a transparent preparation of the volunteer, the Coordinating. Organisation can ask a full justification of the sending activity costs.
- Ensures that the volunteer attends the full EVS Training and Evaluation Cycle, including the on-arrival training and the mid-term evaluation taking place in Stockholm.
- In cooperation with the Hosting Organisation and the volunteer makes the travel arrangements.
- Identify a supervisor who will support and coordinate the volunteer at his/her work place.
- Identifies a mentor who is responsible for providing personal support to the volunteer.
- In cooperation with the HO identifies clear learning opportunities for the volunteer.
- Encourages contact with other EVS volunteers whenever possible.
- Transfers to the volunteer monthly pocket money and food allowance in the beginning of the month.
- At the end of the project, the coordinating organisation completes the final report and sends it to the Swedish National Agency (Ungdomsstyrelsen).

## X. VOICES FROM SWEDISH VOLUNTEERS

**Name:** Anna Cecilia Slätt  
age 24 from Mölndal

**EVS:** Tallin, Estonia  
**Host organisation:** Continous Action  
**Period:** 1 month, 2009 (short term EVS)



Can you describe your EVS and your duties in brief?

I worked in a pre-school called “kindergarten Tihse” with 5-6 years old children. I took care of the children, I participated in activities such as playing football in the yard. Then I helped the staff with various things and tasks. Together with other volunteers we also made an EVS info tour by bicycle.

Why do you think young people should go on the European Voluntary Service?

I think young people should go away because this is just one life time opportunity in their lives. An experience you can never get here in Sweden.



### What advantages does the EVS have? And are there disadvantages?

The advantages are that you get so many experiences, learn new culture / history of another country and that you get to know new people. The only drawback for me was homesickness otherwise I see no disadvantages of the EVS.

### How has the EVS have been useful to you in your life? What have you learned?

EVS has been very valuable for me because I have learned that you should be pleased with what little you have and people in other countries may have a difficult time. For example I worked in a pre-school where the staff couldn't afford to buy the glue for the children. And it all depends on the recession at the time. These experiences and qualifications are good to have when I apply for a job.



### Can you recommend EVS to other young people, why in that case?

I can really recommend EVS to others because it's an experience that you may never have and you get to know other people from many other countries that you probably would not have met otherwise.

**Name:** Ludwig Ahlqvist  
age 20 from Göteborg

**EVS:** Mantova, Italy

**Host organisation:** InCo

**Period:** 12 months, 2011-2012



### Can you describe your EVS and your duties in brief?

Three months ago I arrived in Italy for a year as EVS volunteer in an orphanage called “SOS Villaggio dei bambini Mantova.” It is a home for children and adolescents who had a difficult childhood. The idea is to allow children to be growing up in the best possible way. Here they sleep, eat breakfast, lunch and dinner, doing homework and playing! My job here was to to be a link between children and educators: playing, helping with their homework and household. It may sound simple, but here it is not always given that young people help with washing and cleaning. That is to say that my task in general is to be a good example for children.

### What advantages does the EVS have? And are there disadvantages?

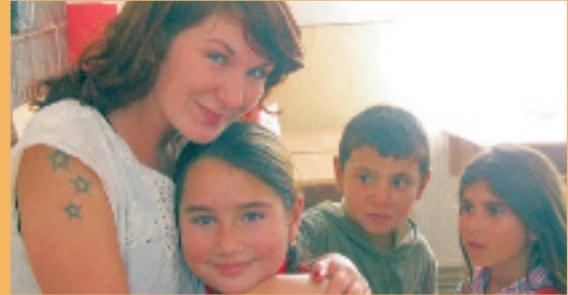
It is an experience not to miss! EVS has all the potential benefits you may want if you are a youth who want to experience Europe! You can more or less choose where you want to make your EVS - in almost all European countries. There is an expression that says that you should learn at least one thing a day but here you will learn at least two in 6, 9 or 12 months! You get a fun opportunity to learn a new language and meet lot of others in your age doing the same thing and think that EVS is the coolest and most fun you've ever done! Disadvantages? If you are looking for them you will find them.

### How has the EVS have been useful to you in your life? What have you learned?

EVS has been the perfect springboard for me to get away from the safe life at home to stand on their own and build my own life. I have already, after 3 months, met people that I will be in contact with until I'm old and gray. I've learned that if you really want something you have to show a little hell (jävlaranamma) and making contact with new people without knowing a word of the language and hold an entire conversation just to be friends, maybe for life.

**Name:** Mikaella Vigart  
age 20 from Mölndal

**EVS:** Craiova, Romania  
**Host organisation:** EPYD  
**Period:** 9 months, 2011



### Can you describe your EVS and your duties in brief?

The project involved working for integration between Roma and Romanians. I worked in one of Romania's largest Roma areas, where we taught the kids in school and organized events, campaigns and seminars for both Roma and Romanians. I organized a social campaign where we collected clothes for the poor children that we handed out in the most needy families before the start of school. We made a documentary about how hard it is for the Roma to try to fit into the Romanian society. We organized a summer camp with 15 Roma children from three different parts of Craiova, the town where we lived and worked.

### Why do you think young people should go on the European Voluntary Service?

It's incredibly fun and a great adventure that makes everyone develop very much at all levels as a

person. It's free - European Commission is responsible for almost all costs, and you make friends for life who come from different parts of the world.

### What advantages does the EVS have? And are there disadvantages?

It is free, you can select a project / country that interests you, you meet other volunteers from abroad, you get free language course, organization and the National Agency will prepare you well with the communication / training courses, you get spending money and food money every month, you have AXA insurance - which feels safe if an accident were to occur, you get support from a mentor. There are no disadvantages to the concept of EVS, in my opinion, the only drawback can be the organization. Always be sure that the project you are looking has a reputable organization behind. There are organizations that treat their volunteers bad.

### What have you learned?

It would take me hours to express myself on paper everything that I have developed and learned during my time as a volunteer. If I must be brief enough to say "I learned to be a true survivor".

Describe your EVS in three words: Adventure, Challenges, Experiences.

### Can you recommend EVS to other young people?

My answer is simply "Absolutely." You can only do EVS once in your life and it would be sad if you do not take the chance to discover new places, cultures, and create lasting memories by saying "Yes4EVS"!

**Name:** Jonas Sundh  
age 19 from Partille

**EVS:** Tourcoing, France,  
**Host organisation:** ADICE  
**Period:** 9 months



**Can you describe your EVS and your duties in brief?**

I worked with youth mobility in the small French town of Tourcoing. I went to school, I gave lectures on the EVS program and I contributed with a youth perspective on meetings and Seminars. On Fridays I was an assistant English teacher at a local school with limited resources.

**Why do you think young people should go on the EVS?**

Do not hesitate! EVS is a chance for young people to grow, as every day is a new challenge!

**Can you recommend EVS to other young people?**

Absolutely! To all of you, everyone deserves this kind of chance in life.

## XI. WHAT IS KEKS?

### Interview with Jonas Agdur, Chairman of KEKS

**Andreea Mariş:** Jonas, could you tell me some facts about KEKS, like founding date, objective, members etc.?

**Jonas Agdur:** Yes. KEKS started in 2005 when the municipalities of Mölndal, Kungälv and Öckerö in West Sweden, decided to work together on the topic of youth work with focus on methods regarding non-formal learning in a leisure context where young people come on a voluntary basis. KEKS launched a model for setting goals and measure their achievement that has been of a great importance for improving our youth work. Today the KEKS network has 20 member municipalities and around 120 youth centres. Our objective is to develop the quality and competences in the field of youth work among our members.



**AM:** How do you develop the youth work quality and competences among the members?

**JA:** There are four main ways through which we are improving the youth work:

1. Development of competences, which is made on a regular basis through the Utvecklingsforum (Development forum) but also through methods like personal coaching for work groups etc.
2. Development and improvement of work methods.
3. Measures to improve the organisation of financial means within the youth work. One innovative method is the programme "Show me the money" which supports the development of young peoples' skills and abilities in regard with writing, implementing and reporting a project in the same time with empowering them to choose and act for the changes they need and want to do in the youth centres.
4. Use of "Loggboken" which is a web based system for documentation used in almost all the KEKS youth centres. Loggboken is an important instrument that gives a good picture of the activities taking place in the youth centres.

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**AM:** Could you give us more details about the model for setting goals and measure the achievements?

**JA:** Our goals are designed in relation with the needs of the youngsters visiting the youth centres. The purpose is not to measure what we do but what the young people get from what we do. We put the focus on customers and not on what we deliver. The beneficiaries of our work – young people – should



get as much as possible by visiting the youth centres and attending the activities developed. We measure the satisfaction of the youngsters through two surveys, an annual survey and a group survey. In 2010; 3500 young people answered the survey. While the annual survey includes three main parts – information about the youngster; “safety & security in the youth centre”, “interaction with staff”; and “degree of participation and youth influence” – the group survey is applied for different activities and it is focused on the youngsters’ degree of involvement and participation for a specific action.

**AM: How is KEKS financed?**

**JA:** The budget of KEKS comes from two main sources. First of all, the membership fees paid by the member municipalities and secondly, the projects gained after applying to different national and international calls and financial lines, for example the European Social Fund.

**AM: Is the network including only youth centres from the Gothenburg region?**

**JA:** No. KEKS also incorporates municipalities and youth centres from Malmö and Stockholm regions.

**AM: What does KEKS offer to its members?**

**JA:** Management of the surveys and Loggboken are the two basic services provided to the members. The members have free access to the courses and seminars organized on a regular basis and if

needed they can get support in coaching. Consultancy for capacity building is another service the network provides for its members. In addition the strength of being part of the biggest Swedish network of youth centres and the brand of KEKS.

Beside this they can come up with suggestions and needs to which the network responds.

In relation with the international dimensions, KEKS members receive support on international youth work. Right now, KEKS manages 12 international volunteers spread in different youth centres of the network. And we also send around 4-7 Swedish volunteers abroad every year.

**AM: Where does KEKS strength come from?**

**JA:** KEKS is strong because is not just a network for youth workers. KEKS is a network in which the whole organisation, from staff to heads of office and politicians, takes part. It is not a network for individuals but a network for organisations.

**AM: In what kind of international work is KEKS engaged?**

**JA:** At international level KEKS works on two plans. The first one is the involvement of young people in different transnational activities. Because of this we got the accreditation as a sending, coordinating and hosting organisation for the European Voluntary Service programme. We are also working with Youth Exchanges, study visits and other actions of the Youth in Action programme and other EU financial lines. The second plan involves the development and improvement of youth work by exchanging good practices at international level. With this purpose we are presently preparing a visit from an Estonian delegation to our office in Mölndal.

## XII. SUPPORT

If you are a KEKS member and you have more questions or you need some help, here is what KEKS can help you with:

- Support for filling the Expression of Interest.
- Examples of Activity Agreements/EVS Contracts.
- Model of “Health and Security Form”.
- Model of Invitation for Visa.
- Detailed information about EVS, AXA Insurance and Youth pass.
- International contacts.
- Put you in contact with the network of volunteers.
- Promote your projects and calls through the Eurodesk network.
- Support for writing a project.
- Take part in different project management courses organized within and for KEKS members.

### XIII. VOCABULARY

#### AA – Activity Agreement (EVS-avtal)

Document including all details of the project, such as title and project's dates, identification of the volunteer, role and tasks of the volunteer, rights of the partners, financial details, practical arrangements, expected learning outcomes, signature of the partners and the volunteer.

#### AXA – AXA (livförsäkring)

Life/health insurance for all volunteers withing the YiA programme, mandatory and free of cost for the volunteer. Covers almost everything from dental care to a regular doctors visit. You must however pay first and get money reimbursed after the EVS from European benefits.

EI – Expression of interest.

EVS – European voluntary service (Europeisk volontärtjänst).

NA – National agency (Nationellt programkontor, Ungdomsstyrelsen i Sverige).

YE – Youth exchange (Ungdomsutbyte).

YiA – Youth in action (Ung och aktiv i Europa).

### Young people with fewer opportunities

- are young people that are at a disadvantage compared to their peers because they face one or more of the situations and obstacles mentioned below. In certain contexts, these situations/obstacles prevent young people from having effective access to formal and non-formal education, transnational mobility and from participation, active citizenship, empowerment and inclusion in society at large. The categories are: social obstacles, economic obstacles, disability, educational difficulties, cultural differences, health problems and geographical obstacles.

### Youthpass

- is a tool for participants of projects funded by the Youth in Action Programme to describe what they have done and to show what they have learnt.

Youthpass Certificates are available for European Voluntary Service, Youth Exchanges, Training Courses and for Youth Initiatives.

## CONTACTS

Do you have more questions about EVS or the YiA programme?

KEKS Network (Coordinating organisation)

Sara Lesch: [sara.lesch@molndal.se](mailto:sara.lesch@molndal.se)

## LINKS

KEKS Network

[www.keks.nu](http://www.keks.nu)

K-internationalt blog

[www.k-internationalt.blogspot.com](http://www.k-internationalt.blogspot.com)

Swedish National Youth Board

[www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se](http://www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se)

Expression of Interest

[http://www3.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/uas/  
AppFormPreview\\_p24\\_f1\\_p.do](http://www3.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/uas/AppFormPreview_p24_f1_p.do)

EVS application form

[http://www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/  
kat/1,2070,1376,00.html](http://www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/kat/1,2070,1376,00.html)

EVS database of available EVS-projects

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/evs/aod/hei\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/evs/aod/hei_en.cfm);

CV Europass format

[http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/  
home/vernav/Europass+Documents/  
Europass+CV.csp](http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/vernav/Europass+Documents/Europass+CV.csp)

Youthpass certificate

[www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu)

European Youth Portal

<http://europa.eu/youth/index.cfm>

European Commission – Youth

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm)

Salto Resource Center

<http://www.salto-youth.net/>

Eurodesk network

[www.eurodesk.eu](http://www.eurodesk.eu)

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## CREDENTIALS

**Editors:** Akaki Jamburia, Andreea Mariş, Sara Lesch.

**Layout/Illustrations:** Sara Bergando <http://www.sarabergando.com>

**Photos:** Cláudio Ricardo Carvalho Ernesto, Cristina Gallo Calvo, Sara Bergando, Sara Lesch, Youth Centres Mölndal.

# EVS MANUAL



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