The Good
THE YOUTH &
THE VOLUNTEER

A compilation of good practices
In the field of international volunteering
/// Contributions

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Erasmus+
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THE PROJECT

This booklet is the result of a 16 months project, based on the collective work of 7 organisations active in the field of youth work and particularly in volunteering, all around Europe. Each actor of this project work with volunteering through European projects, the European Voluntary Service (EVS) and the European Solidarity Corps (ESC), and also at local scale with national volunteering programs.

The members of this project “The good, the Youth and the Volunteer” have been working together in different projects for a few years and felt the need to get into perspective their daily practices and to create a space of reflection among experienced professionals.

Our main aim was to share good practices to ensure and foster the quality and the accessibility of volunteering for youth with fewer opportunities.

The different partners of this project are the following:

/// Association Hors Pistes (Marseille, France), coordinator of the project.
/// P.E.CO. - Progetti Europei Di Cooperazione (Genova, Italy)
/// Team for Youth Association (Baia Mare, Romania)
/// Politistikо Ergastiri Ayion Omoloyiton (Lefkosia, Cyprus)
/// La Vibria Intercultural (Terrassa, Spain)
/// Centrum ds.Katastrof i Klesk Zywiolowych TRATWA (Wroclaw, Poland)
/// NGO «Actio Catholica Patria» (Kaunas, Lithuania)

Here are the most relevant part of the good practices gathered during the different phases of the project. The main aim of this booklet is to share with European actors of volunteering a part of our project’s results, and to enable volunteering actors in different countries to implement the good practices we identified.

This project included different meetings between the partners in 2018 and 2019: A kick-off meeting in Cyprus in March 2018, 1 trans-national meeting at the middle of the project (Poland in December 2018), and 3 job-shadowing sessions (Romania in June 2018, Lithuania in November 2018 and Spain in February 2019). A final seminar is currently on going in Marseille (June 2019).

«The Good, the Youth and the Volunteer» project enabled us, partners, to:

/// Share good practices on an international level
/// Create a strong partnership with common values and practices
/// Develop quality projects adapted to the needs of youth with fewer opportunities
WHAT IS KA2?

This project was implemented within the framework of the Key Action 2 of the Erasmus + program: “Cooperation for innovation and exchanges of good practices”.

This action is about enabling organisations to work together in order to improve their provision for learners and to share innovative practices.

Under Key Action 2, organisations can apply for funding to work in partnership with organisations from other countries who participate to the Erasmus + programme.

The projects funded under this Key Action focus on sharing, developing and transferring innovative practices in Education, Training and Youth between participating countries.

Erasmus + Key Action 2 covers the five fields of higher education, vocational education and training, schools, adult and youth education.
Hors Pistes is an organisation working on the field of **non-formal education** founded in 2013 and based in Marseille, France.

“Hors Pistes” means thinking outside the box, accepting unexpected discoveries, changing perspectives. It’s overcoming preconceived ideas, escaping one’s comfort zone, opening horizons and being surprised. It’s going through paths we didn’t suspect, paths which make us grow up and learn.

We wish to foster **interculturality** in all its forms, encounters and mutual learnings opportunities, international and learning mobility. But also to implement actions with local impact and recognize knowledge and skills as factors of emancipation and empowerment.

Hors Pistes develops a number of **international projects** supported by the Erasmus+ program, the European Solidarity Corps and FGYO (French German Youth Office):
- Sending, hosting and coordinating volunteers
- International training courses for youth and/or social workers
- Intercultural youth exchanges
- Erasmus + Internships in Europe for unemployed people

Hors Pistes also develops **local actions**:
- An intercultural mentoring programme between migrant and local inhabitants for building social links and a better inclusion of migrants in their hosting community
- Local activities in Marseille, based on non-formal education, as trainings and workshops about linguistic, intercultural dialogue and promotion of tolerance
- Sensitization of youth with fewer opportunities in order to foster their inclusion and participation through international mobility programmes

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THE PARTNERS

/// Team for Youth Association
Activities at Team for Youth Association revolve around a set of values that have formed in time and have grown together with the experience of our team: interculturality, volunteerism, tolerance, team spirit, and excellence. Based on these beliefs, our assumed mission is to stimulate the youngsters to develop themselves through volunteering activities, international mobility and non-formal education.
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/// P.E.CO. - Progetti Europei Di Cooperazione
P.E.CO. - Progetti Europei di Cooperazione operates in the sector of youth distress and emargination through the promotion of international youth mobility, intercultural learning and non-formal education at European and local level in Liguria region. P.E.CO. deals with the design and coordination of international mobility and volunteering projects promoted by the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes of the European Union, such as youth exchanges, training courses and volunteering.
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/// Politistiko Ergastiri Ayion Omoloyiton
The Cultural Workshop was established as a nonprofit organization in 2002, running cultural activities which were developed throughout the years. (Traditional music workshop, workshop of Film, Photography, and theatre). More than 100 children and adults have the chance to be involved and express themselves artistically through the various activities offered by the Cultural Workshop. Having as a base the respect of tradition and cultural heritage (tangible and intangible), having implemented ethnographic research in regarding Cyprus traditional dances and music, by cooperating with specialists in the field of traditional music and dance and getting involved in European funded projects concerning culture and education, the Cultural Workshop has a long list of activities and outcomes to introduce.
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/// La Víbria Intercultural
La Víbria Intercultural is an experimented association on international youth mobility. Our main goal is facilitating youth mobility and, through this, promoting solidarity, tolerance, non-formal and intercultural education to our society. We consult youth and organizations that desire to learn more about international mobility, about the opportunities to travel, work, volunteer in other countries, and means of financial support existing. And we also manage projects by ourselves: youth exchanges and Training courses from Erasmus+, volunteering with European solidarity corps, and internships with TLN-Mobility.
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/// Centrum ds.Katastrof i Klesk Zywiołowych TRATWA
The history of TRATWA (which means “raft” in English) began with the Non-Governmental Information Center established in August 1997. Our main objectives include development and professionalization of the third sector, providing quality support to young people in risk of exclusion through non-formal education methods and promotion of volunteering, intercultural and intergenerational awareness and mutual respect. Volunteering has always been and always will be an integral part of our association’s activities. It is thanks to the commitment, ideas and hard work of international European volunteers ESC and local volunteers that we have achieved so much over the past 21 years of our activity.
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/// NGO «Actio Catholica Patria»
NGO “A. C. Patria” works since 1991. It offers social and cultural services, promotes local and international volunteering for young people and supports the organizations receiving volunteers, provides trainings and methodological background.
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GOOD PRACTICES
IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING

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1.2 Mentorship dinner
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1.1 LANGUAGE CAMP

ONE TIME ACTIVITY /// TRATWA

This project was designed for a group of twelve volunteers in order to improve and practice intensively their Polish language level. Since they are international volunteers, it is important to help them with the learning process in a more interactive way. Generally, this project lasts 3 days and the volunteers have a specific schedule in which they have to speak only in Polish in different daily activities and creative workshops.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

-To learn and practice Polish language
-To promote and exercise team building skills
-To improve the integration and communication amongst volunteers

/// DESCRIPTION

Taking into consideration the lack of opportunities to practice Polish for the volunteers, this project became a necessity for improving their language skills. Polish Language camp is a project with a duration of 3 days, outside the busy city of Wrocław, more specific in an eco-farm in Nowina village.

During the camp days, the volunteers actively participate in a very complex project frame that includes day by day routines that they can face in the normal days like: shopping in the markets, cooking, communicating with Polish persons or attending different activities such as a short theatrical performance and a treasure hunt. Usually, the volunteers are competing in 3 teams and they are allowed to communicate only in Polish from 9 AM to 5 PM.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES ?

The preparation time is defined by the very first steps: from finding the place where to host the activity and all the volunteers to dynamic of the whole language camp. This can take from 3 to 5 days, depending of the number of activities and workshops that you want to implement for the entire period, and also the number of participants.

The language camp is designed for 3 days, in which everybody is participating actively in all the workshops. The afternoons are usually reserved for team building and relaxing. To be remembered that these days are quite intensive and with a big number of tasks and activities. There were 4 rounds of evaluations that we were running, after the end of every day, in order to listen to their feedbacks and to give the chance to the participants to propose suggestions and organize the evenings as they agreed. And the last evaluation at the end of the camp to evaluate the entire language camp.

Regarding the preparations, it usually takes us 3 days to brainstorm about logistics, accommodation and activities. Normally, the first day starts with dividing the teams and presenting the schedule and the instructions. Each workshop is run in a different place. The cooking workshop is carried out in the cabin’s kitchen, the treasure hunt in the forest nearby and the preparation and the performance moment of the theater in the pavilion.

Rotation is the key element for running these activities in the same time with everybody’s participation. We also have extra activities. For example, this year we implemented a practical workshop about old printing press methods, teambuilding activities and massage therapy.

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

Required materials for theater workshop and treasure hunt: Polish dictionaries and specific list of Polish words meant to help the volunteers during workshops, sheets of paper, markers, stickers, theater props, board games. For the cooking workshop, we did daily grocery shopping, since each team had to prepare their own recipe and list of ingredients.

/// DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

We would disseminate this practice through social media profile of the organisation; we would also create a hashtag and volunteers could individually share the information about this activity.

/// TIPS

One of our strongest suggestions is to run this project during a warm season, in a quiet and friendly atmosphere surrounded by nature. It has a flexible dynamic where you can play with the number of activities and be creative.

The activities of this project should be created so they can bring a new positive energy within the group and don’t forget to enjoy them together.

In the eventuality of a long-term voluntary program, this project should be run in the middle of the period, when volunteers already have basic knowledge of the language of the country, they are living in.
Our mentors are viewed more as free time support and they act as a “bridge” between the international volunteer and the local culture. The mentor feels the need to integrate the volunteer in the new culture he/she is faced with. In order to make things more interesting and friendly for the mentor and the mentee, we have implemented the mentors’ dinner as an introduction activity. The mentor cooks something from his/her country and/or the volunteer something from his/her country.

Aims and Objectives
- Getting familiar with the culture and background of each person involved
- Creating a friendly atmosphere where the volunteer gains trust and opens up
- Sharing effort together, working together outside working hours
- Sharing a meal is a great way to kick off discussions and talk about the personal interests of the volunteer

Description
Because the dinner is cooked in a home-like atmosphere (not in a public space or in the volunteers’ accommodation, where other volunteers can be present) it creates a “safe” and “intimate” environment.

Because the mentor and the volunteer decide to cook meals from each other’s countries, it helps the volunteer to share his/her own personal experience about the country.

How much time does this practice takes?
Preparation: the mentor and the volunteer can go shopping for the dinner ingredients together and the decision about the date and time is done together. This can be done in the same day or one day before.

Dinner: the cooking and dinner can last as long as needed.

Material needed
This is done between the mentor and the volunteer (mentee) and it does not involve the organisation (but as good practice the activity coordinators are notified). The meal costs are shared between the participants.

Sometimes the volunteer can bring ingredients from his/her country. We usually try to use local ingredients, bought in the local market. We keep it as simple and practical as possible.

Tips
It can become a regular event. After they tried a recipe, both mentor and the volunteer can try it for a larger number of people, in different contexts sharing the gained new knowledge.
1.3 PROJECT LOGO

ONE TIME ACTIVITY /// TEAM FOR YOUTH ASSOCIATION

We coordinate and host several projects at the same time. It is important for the international volunteers to identify themselves with their project and to create a visual representation of it. So, for this they are asked to come up with a design, all together, that will be used in all publications from their project, together with the logo of Erasmus + and Team For Youth.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- We use the project logo in the first part of their activities because we want to create a visual identity of their projects
- The volunteers get to use their creativity in creating something new, for the project, at the beginning of their volunteering stage
- It's good in assessing the creativity of the volunteers from one project
- It's good in identifying potential leader roles (since it's a teamwork activity) within the project
- The volunteers find out more about the particularity of their project

/// DESCRIPTION

At first, we discuss with the volunteer the importance of branding and creating a unique visual representation of their project. We want to make them understand that their projects are unique, even if they are hosted and coordinated by the same organisation.

We make a short training about visual representation, giving some basic tips and tricks on how to create logos, what digital resources they can use, we also give them examples of previous logos used within our organisation. We provide the volunteers with all the necessary tools to create their logo. If they don't feel prepared to create it digitally, they can make it manually, on paper and the project coordinator helps in digitizing their work. They have full creative freedom when designing their logo, they work in teams or individually. At least 3 distinct logo options (called logo proposals) are created within a (clearly) established deadline.

We collect all the logo proposals (regardless of quality and relevance) from the volunteers and we post a POLL (online voting) on our social media group, with some information about the project (a few objectives, name and team). The POLL allows people not involved in the project to vote.

If there are a lot of logo proposals, we can also go outside and ask random people what they think best represents the project, with the information they have.

We select one of the proposals, based on vote from the staff, the other volunteers and the random survey on the street.

The selected proposal becomes the visual identity of the project.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES ?

Preparation : a few hours in which we talk with the volunteers about their project and the necessity of creating a visual representation to better represent it.

Implementation : usually a few days for creating all the logo proposals.

Evaluation : depends on the voting for the proposals. For fewer proposals it can take a few days. For more, up to one week.

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

The most important aspect is to have a time within the volunteers’ daily schedule specially allocated for the logo creation. Then of course, the working space needs to be equipped with materials (paper, pens, markers, crayons, colours, etc.) and with at least a few laptops / PCs (if the volunteers don’t bring their own). Wi-Fi is also needed as some of the programs used for creating the logos are freeware but online. A normal associations office is fine. Printers and Wi-Fi for the printing of the logos are needed, too.

/// DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

The logo can be used as watermark for all the pictures / videos from within the project. You can add it to any volunteers’ publications and it can be printed on T-shirts, cups, hats to add visibility. The possibilities of the organisation and of the project is the only limitation in which you can use the new logo.

/// TIPS

It’s important to clearly establish a deadline for creation and voting for the logo proposals. It’s important that all volunteers within a project work. You can also add that it should be one proposal per volunteer in order to be clearer.

The logo should be in accordance to the project activities / the volunteers within the project / the objectives in the project.

Use this good practice only as a “project appetizer”. It should be done in the first days or weeks and it should not be considered an ongoing activity or an activity to replace the other ones from the project.

The selection of the logo should be done as democratic as possible and the final result (final selection) should follow the visual directives of common sense.

The Good The Youth & The Volunteer
1.4 TALKING STICKS

ONE TIME ACTIVITY /// POLITISTIKO ERGASTIRI AYION OMOLYITON

A good feedback session that allows people to talk only when they hold the pen. The stick goes around and everyone has 2 minutes to share their feelings, opinions or suggestions. A good conflict resolution tool.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Allows everyone to talk
- Allows time to share, but most importantly, to listen
- It can resolve a conflict when arises, allowing both sides to share in front of other
- It makes the elephant in the room visible
- Sparks conversation. Thus, timing is important and monitoring the process
- Respect another’s viewpoint

/// DESCRIPTION

The aims and objectives are reached by giving the opportunity to people to share and talk. This exercise is used as a feedback or at the middle of short volunteering projects, when the excitement becomes softer and personal issues might arise. At the end of the day, a feedback session is suggested, with this activity proposed in order to rise and encourage discussion, or people to share their point of view and experience up to that point.

There is an important facilitation process that needs to be made during this activity. Keeping a time limit is important when people want to share things and being able to encourage those that are feeling more difficult to share and intervene when someone speaks longer than expected.

People sit in a circle. The talking stick is passed from person to person as they speak and only the person that holds the stick is allowed to talk during this time. Every member of the circle needs to listen closely to the words being spoken, so when their turn comes, they do not repeat unneeded information or ask impertinent questions. Decisions can be made during this activity or just allowed conversion to flourish and understand different viewpoints.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES ?

It can take from 30 minutes to 2 hours.

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

A pen or pencil or a stick and a place for people to sit in a circle.

/// TIPS

Sitting in a circle is important.
The stick goes around continuously.
If someone’s turn comes and the person doesn’t wish to share anything, the stick is taken back and passed over.
This activity stops when no one else has something to share.
1.5 VIDEO CONTEST

ONE TIME ACTIVITY /// POLITISTIKO ERGASTIRI AYION OMOLYITON

The group target is the volunteers. It is a tool offered to volunteers to describe and promote their work not only towards other volunteers, but also towards other organisations. It offers the opportunity for them to work as a team, supporting each other, even if someone does not have the skills of creating a documentary. This activity has been used in the past to provide a platform for the European Volunteers to have a voice in Cyprus and promote Volunteering and, more specifically, their tasks.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To support the volunteers in understanding their volunteering experience
- To disseminate their work
- To be creative

/// DESCRIPTION

Call for the contest, defining the theme, the time of the outcome (usually 5 min video).

Once the call is out and we have groups of volunteers that submit videos for the contest, then these are presented in an event organised in Politistiko.

There we have an expert committee to decide the winner who received a prize.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES?

About 3 months.

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

Participants in the activity should have a filming device (camera or phone) and a video editing device and software (laptop or phone).
2.1 INTEGRATION WEEK

PART OF THE HOSTING PROCESS /// HORS PISTES

When hosting a lot of volunteers, it is important for them and for the coordinating organisation to keep a moment in order to get to know each other, to reach the topics of volunteering and to share experiences, fears and expectations. On one hand, the coordinating organisation needs to build a trustful relationship with its volunteers. On the other hand, the volunteers need to create their own local network.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Strengthening the links between the coordinated volunteers and Hors Pistes: create a trustful relationship
- Enhancing the links and the contacts between coordinated volunteers
- Easily preventing the problems that could occur during the missions of the volunteers
- Establishing new projects: developing shared projects between the volunteers hosted in different organisations
- Allowing the volunteers to smoothly discover their new environment

/// DESCRIPTION

We gather all the coordinated volunteers and coordinating team of Hors Pistes for 3 days at the same time.

It starts with the arrival of the coordinated volunteers on the first day of their voluntary mission (written in their activity agreement). We are managing their flights so they are all arriving within the same day. The 4th day is planned for the volunteers to go to the different cities of their voluntary mission. We usually planned in such a way that all the volunteers started their voluntary service in September, so we can use their first week for the integration part.

At the arrival, in order to find their accommodation and settle for the week, the volunteers are supported by Hors Pistes team. Further on, we organise a first night all together in order to create a first contact and a first team building process.

The integration week is then designed with non-formal education activities. We plan different sessions of activities in order to reach all the objectives of this week: energizers, team building activities, get to know each other, linguistic activities, administrative check (each volunteer has his contract signed, insurance is ok, …), what is volunteering?, what is non-formal education?, what are my fears, expectations and contributions?, learnings, hosting organisations visits, developing projects together.

The 4th day is reserved for the volunteers to go to their hosting organisations and to discover their new environment.

/// DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

During this week, we publish materials (photos, articles…) on our online networks (Facebook page or Instagram account). We share events with our local network of mobility actors (the CAMI) as well. When possible, we try to invite other volunteers arriving in Marseille from other organisations to have a small event all together (for the volunteers, this is a way of discovering a network in the region).

There is also a video-making during the week, and then we use this movie to promote the volunteering activities in France.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES ?

Preparation: 1 month before for the logistic part + 3 days of preparation of the program.

Implementation: 3 days (+2 days of travel arrival and departure).

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

Some logistic aspects have to be kept in mind: arranging all arrivals on the same day (booking transport tickets for the arrival), accommodation for the whole group, activities room, planning the arrivals of the volunteers in their different hosting organisations (be sure to be in touch with the tutors and that everything is ready for their arrival), arranging the coffee breaks and meals (if needed).

For this integration week we involve 3 employees of Hors Pistes that are working on volunteering activities inside the organisation. The materials needed is quite basic: flipcharts, markers, papers, etc.

/// TIPS

It is better to have a group of volunteers (minimum 8): the more participants you have, the most interesting the exchanges will be (for the diversity of profiles, projects and expectations). The volunteers need to start their mission at the same time.

Plan the activities in different places (in a working room, in a park, …). It brings a fresh air among the participants and among the activities as well.

If possible, try to accommodate all the group in the same place not only for saving time for the logistics, but also for illustrating the team building aspect.

The informal activities are very important. Make sure you have free time for the volunteers. As coordinators, try to participate in these informal activities: it makes possible a better contact with the volunteers (but keep in mind to have some rest, too).
MENTOR NETWORK

2.2 PART OF THE HOSTING PROCESS /// NGO ACTIO CATHOLICA PATRIA

Mentoring network is a support system to ensure technical support for hosting coordinator and emotional / non-formal learning support to volunteer.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Supporting key actors of the project
- Ensuring quality in receiving volunteers

/// DESCRIPTION

The mentors are meeting the volunteers monthly, keeping a connection with the hosting coordinator, tutor in receiving organization and the volunteer.

Quarterly meetings with the coordinator and monthly reports online.

Quarterly meetings with the tutor in the receiving organization (the volunteer is participating) and phone calls, if needed.

Monthly meetings with the volunteer.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES ?

The preparation for the mentors starts in August (they receive the volunteers’ contacts and have a meeting with the coordinator).

The implementation takes as long as the volunteer is staying.

The evaluation takes about 2 hours with the volunteer and tutor in the receiving organization; there is also a final mentors’ meeting.

/// TIPS

There should be clear expectations for the mentors from the coordinator (meeting volunteer 1x/month, filling in protocols, taking care of some technical issues in the beginning such as: taking volunteer from the airport, helping to open a bank account (if needed), bringing to the receiving organisation for the first time, taking to the doctor if needed, being available through the service, etc.).

/// MENTOR NETWORK IN THE WORDS OF MARIJA, COORDINATOR

«In international volunteering projects, A.C. Patria has a special structure in terms of mentor network. All of the mentors are present or former employees of A.C. Patria. This ensures that the main aim and idea of mentoring is closely shared by all of the mentors.

Each international volunteer has a mentor. According to time resources/wish, each mentor has at least 1, at most 5 volunteers in his/her care. The mentor is very supportive in the beginning: she/he gets to know the volunteers via email, picks him/her up after arriving to Lithuania, introduces him/her to the flat and gotogether to the first meeting in the hosting organization, where the mentor mediates the first talk between the volunteer and the hosting organization (greeting, getting to know each other, expectations, goals, rules).

After a more intense contact during the first weeks of the volunteer, the mentor keeps meeting with the volunteer once a month to check the general situation, feelings and moods. He/she is also guiding the volunteer in his/her learning process, discussing it purely or with the help of methods, tools (e.g. storyline, Youthpass).

The mentor is «bound» to the hosting organization, i.e. the same mentor is mentoring various volunteers every year coming to one and the same organization. Thus, the mentor is more aware of the specificities of the hosting organization, is more familiar with the staff and its expectations from the volunteer, and is therefore more capable in making the organization-volunteer encounter smoother and more qualitative.

The coordinator is in close cooperation with the mentors in three ways: firstly, the coordinator works in the same space with most of the mentors and is always quickly reachable in a case of emergency. Secondly, every mentor meets his/her volunteering once a month and fills in a google drive protocol, which the coordinator reads once a month and is up-to-date in the general situation of the specific volunteer. Thirdly, every three-four months the coordinator calls a mentor meeting during which the coordinator updates the mentors with important news/changes/situations and goes into deeper topics depending on the wish of the mentors (e.g. discussing a specific case).»
2.3 TRAINING FOR TUTORS

PART OF THE HOSTING PROCESS /// HORS PISTES

In the hosting organisations that we coordinate, there are a lot of tutors for whom it is the first experience of tutoring and they need to know more about tutoring and volunteering. There are also others who are well experimented and who can share their experiences. They also need to know each other and to create a local network.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Giving tools and pieces of advice to the tutors
- Sharing experiences about tutoring with international volunteers
- Talking about what is volunteering and non-formal education
- Allowing tutors from different organisations to know each other
- Sharing ideas of missions that can be given to the volunteers
- Sharing experiences and good practices

/// DESCRIPTION

All the activities during the training are based on the methods of non-formal education. In order to reach different objectives, we have different sessions of activities.

What is volunteering and non-formal education? During this session, the tutors brainstorm about the difference between an employee, a student, an intern and a volunteer, so they can have a better idea about the frame, the boundaries and the learning process of volunteering and missions they can give to the volunteers. During the brainstorming, we help them by keeping the discussions on the good path and by clarifying some topics.

To give tools and pieces of advice, we ask everyone to talk about the own experiences of tutoring and the difficulties they faced. We also start a reflection about what could be the "perfect tutor", and we simulate crisis situations using forum theatre. After training, we have a special time to answer the questions they have.

To let them get to know each other, all the activities and the brainstorming sessions are done in groups; at the beginning of the training, there is a time for presentations, and for sharing fears and expectations about tutoring.

We try to involve as many tutors as possible, so we take time to contact everyone, which is sometimes difficult because they are not all in the same town. Later on, we have to prepare the activities in team with all people who will facilitate the training and prepare the graphic supports. We also offer them the lunch so we try to find a restaurant or something to eat.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES ?

Preparation : we need to start the communication about the training more than one month before the established date, since everyone have to be available for this day. To prepare the activities, it depends of the human resources but one entire day could be great.

Implementation : the training takes one entire day.

Evaluation : with all the participants, we do the evaluation at the end of the day. It takes less than one hour.

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

The most important aspect is to have a great working space. We always use a lot of graphic facilitation so it is important to prepare papers, flipcharts, pens etc... The participants are also drawing during the brainstorming sessions.

/// DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

We share with all the participants materials about mentoring (from us, from the National Agency) and we send them pictures about the day and the results of their work (graphic productions etc.). We also publish an article on our Facebook page.

/// TIPS

It is important to maintain a strong contact between us and the tutors, and to explain well why we are doing this training. If it's possible, it is better not doing this training at the beginning of the mission, but after a few weeks, so the tutors for whom it is the first-time tutoring can have an idea of what is volunteering and tutoring.

Use a lot of graphic facilitation! It is important to explain carefully the program of the training to the tutors so they are motivated to join the group. Some of them don't see the interest in coming to this training before participating to one.
PART OF THE HOSTING PROCESS /// POLITISTIKO ERGASTIRI AYION OMOLOYITON

It is suggested to use this practice for any group of volunteers either on their on-arrival training process, during the service, or even during a crisis period. This was decided to be implemented for making the volunteers aware of the ups and downs regarding emotions, moments of stillness or demotivation, moments of questioning the service or even moments of having enjoyment of fun.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

_Crisis Management. In times where the members of a group have a lack of motivation or are facing a small crisis within the group, it is necessary to step out from their position, and through this game, to explore another point of view of the situation_  
_Crises and unforeseen difficulties that can occur in the volunteering experience between an organisation and volunteers_  
_Makes the volunteers step into the organisations’ point of view and vice versa_

/// DESCRIPTION

By using this practice, the volunteers are able to recognise the potential learning path and emotional cycle expected during their service.

What is the learning path of the volunteer? You are in the shoes of a volunteer. Act as a volunteer during this time. Walk the path of a volunteer and try to experience and understand feelings, attitudes, potential, reactions...

The teams start in a different time to follow the timeline.

Instruction: you are a volunteer from the beginning of the session 3 till the end of the session – act as one. You might be waiting. 3-4 teams. A team goes very fast through the process another slower. A team might be kicked out.

Preparation: For facilitators: Document emotions and thoughts after each stage. We give them a profile: volunteer role.

Implementation. Each step represents a concept, which should not be revealed to the participants until the end. Those steps are described with their explanation of what should be prepared for each stage:

- Excitement/confusion/fear: participants get instruction in: English, mirror reflection and Swahili.
- Struggle: doing a lot of things at the same time.
- Feeling useless (confronting expectations vs. reality): sit for a moment in silence.
- Cultural shock: eat something awful.
- Increased motivation – failure: building stone tower (someone destroy it), building again – success.
- Distraction: the groups begin on different time - to simulate the time that the volunteer has to prepare.
- Happiness/satisfaction: party time (champagne for kids?)

Evaluation. After the tasks, the volunteers are asked to document their emotions, feelings, thoughts, what I LIKED and what I DID NOT LIKE. Debriefing should follow with questions guiding the discussion towards realising the reality in volunteering projects, the ups and downs of the process and ways to deal with them.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES?

This practice takes 95 minutes.

Preparation: 20 minutes (some materials need to be found before).

Implementation: 60 minutes.

Evaluation: 15 minutes.

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

It is suggested to have 8-10 participants per group or split the group in 2 so they experience the activity separately (in this case, you will need 2 facilitators/guides).

Material: rice, cups, a welcoming letter in Swahili or Greek, a pile of stones, a dip with various edible ingredients traceable by taste (not needed to be tasty), set of cards.

/// TIPS

Spread around the space in different locations (not just one room).
2.5 JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEERS

PART OF THE HOSTING PROCESS /// LA VIBRIA INTERCULTURAL

It covers the need of visibility of our volunteers, visibility to our local youth and to the whole Spanish youth. It also covers the need of our volunteers to reflect weekly on their experience in a really informal way. As tutors, it is interesting because you can see what is important for them. Any volunteer that we host can do it; however, an own website of the organisation is needed. No matter the age, the number of participants, the social background... It is really transferable to any context.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

-Giving visibility to our volunteers at a local level
-Record the experience of the volunteers
-Be aware of what has been the most important for the volunteer in the month
-Give to the volunteers a space to reflect and express themselves

/// DESCRIPTION

The journal of the volunteers consists in a weekly article on our website, a mini-journal that the volunteers write every week. In our case, as we host four volunteers, every one of them does it just one week up to a month. At the end, every month is described for all of them. In the journal, they explain everything that they want related to his/her experience, thoughts, work, volunteer... during the last week. And they can add photos, videos, songs... etc. After the publication on our website, we disseminate it through our social networks.

First of all, we decide when are we going to publish the articles in the journal of volunteers. In our case, it was easy: each volunteer writes the article of one week, so at the end of the four weeks, they have together the description of a whole month. More or less, each volunteer will write one article per month. We establish an agenda for the whole volunteering project. Moreover, we create a page on our website where we’re going to publish every article. On that page, we introduce the idea of the Journal of volunteers.

Each week there is some volunteer that has the task of writing the article depicting his/her experience of the last week. He/she sends the article to the volunteering coordinator, who will correct it and publish it on the website. At the same time, the coordinator will disseminate the new article on the social networks of the organization.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES?

One hour per week

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

The own website of the hosting or coordinating organization.

/// DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

The practice itself is about the dissemination of the journal, so what we do is to disseminate each time that there is a new article on the journal. We do it through our social networks.

/// TIPS

Depending on the number of the volunteers that you host, you can think about different ways of disseminating. As we have four, we divide a month in four weeks, and everyone writes just one week per month. But if you host more than four, just think of another way of distributing this task amongst them.
2.6 THE GROUP

PART OF THE HOSTING PROCESS /// NGO ACTIO CATHOLICA PATRIA

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Sharing information effectively and transparently
- Building a community where its members are supporting each other
- Contributing to qualitative non-formal learning process within the project

/// DESCRIPTION

After their arrival to the receiving country, the coordinator invites the newcomers to spend a Welcoming Day in the coordinating organisation. During this day, the volunteers meet the coordinator, get to know the space and the general activities of the coordinating organisation.

Moreover, the volunteers get a detailed description about general pieces of information regarding the project (where to charge the transport cards, what are the mini-projects, what is an on-arrival seminar, etc.) and about the roles of the different partners within the project (tutor, mentor, coordinator, sending organization, national agency).

In order to bring the volunteers closer not only to each other, but also to the coordinating organisation, we use methods of getting to know each other, energizers and a common lunch. This is our first step for developing the volunteers into a group during the later monthly volunteer group meetings.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES?

Preparation: there are 2 preparation meetings each month with the volunteers within the group, each meeting taking around 2 hours.

Implementation: 10:00-16:00 once a month.

Evaluation with the group facilitator and the volunteers who helped organising it takes up to 2 hours not later than a week after the meeting.

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

The materials can vary, depending on the program and on the ideas of the facilitator and supporting volunteers. Logistics however is something to think about: space comfortable to work in a group, coffee breaks, lunch and documentation (photos/videos).

/// DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

After each meeting, a post on Facebook and (sometimes) Instagram is written about it.

/// TIPS

For a better future group dynamic, it is suggested that the group of volunteers arrive at the same time, so they all attend the Welcoming day together.

There should be one responsible person who should facilitate the group throughout the year (each meeting is planned with the support of 1-2 volunteers within the group).

Monthly meeting dates are set from the beginning and represent a part of the volunteers’ learning process, which they count as “working hours” although the volunteers do not attend their regular tasks that day.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBoKuxZodA
3.1 COLLECTIVE MEETING

SENDING PROCESS /// HORS PISTES

With a cooperation of organisations working in the field of international mobility for youth, we organise pre-departure collective meetings for youngsters from the region who will leave for an international mobility experience. They all need to be prepared for the volunteering experience, and sometimes we don’t have a lot of participants leaving at the same period, so we need to create a group dynamic with other French volunteers leaving for a volunteering project.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

_Offering a quality preparation to all participants_
_Giving more visibility to the different mobility European programs_
_Giving more visibility to the actions of each organisation of the cooperation_
_Creating a local network of youngsters experiencing international mobility_
_Allowing more sharing experiences amongst youngsters_
_Allowing more sharing of good practices among the cooperation of organisations_

/// DESCRIPTION

Pre-departure collective meetings are designed by our cooperation of organisations with non-formal education activities, in order to allow each participant to be trained for his/her departure abroad.

By mixing participants from different organisations, we manage to reach our objectives of giving visibility to our different organisations and creating a local network of youngsters. Moreover, these pre-departure collective meetings also mix different European programs such as Youth Exchanges, Training Courses, Internships, European voluntary activity or French service civique. This helps us to make visible the different opportunities offered to youngsters who want to live an experience abroad. It allows the participants to think about a new project for the future, too. It especially gives opportunities to youth with fewer opportunities to be in touch with long-term volunteers, for example.

We organise these pre-departure collective meetings once a month. Each month, one employee from one organisation is responsible of preparing and animating the meeting. Each organisation is in charge of at least 3 pre-departure meetings per year.

Each organisation enrols their participants, who will leave soon for a mobility, on a Google Drive document so that the person responsible of the meeting can organise everything. The responsible of the meeting is also responsible of the logistical aspects (activity room, coffee break, material etc). The employee responsible of the pre-departure meeting is supported by one volunteer.

Activities : getting to know each other, linguistic animation, presentation of different projects, expectations/fears/personal inputs about my project, debate about the different programs, facing interculturality, conflict management, « the expatriate curve »

Each coordinator of the organisations who has participants in the meeting come at the end of the day in order to check the administrative aspects before the departure.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES ?

Pre-departure collective meeting lasts 1 day, from 9am to 5pm.

The preparation needs half a day.

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

A group of maximum 25 participants, participants from 14 to 30 years old, with fewer opportunities or not. Logistic aspects: activity room, coffee break, inviting all participants for the pre-departure meeting.

/// DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

For now, we only disseminated within the CAMI (coordination of organisations with whom we are organising these pre-departure meetings). But we haven’t disseminated it further.

/// TIPS

It is important to have a very carefully defined program of the day for the pre-departure meeting, to be sure that each participant will receive the information.

If it is not possible to work with other organisations, mixing the group of participants with different program (volunteering, youth exchanges, etc.) is very interesting.

If needed we can share our activities description.
3.2 PRE DEPARTURE TRAINING

SENDING PROCESS /// NGO ACTIO CATHOLICA PATRIA

The pre-departure training is needed to share necessary information with the larger group of volunteers who are preparing to go abroad, to create personal relations between the volunteers (form a community) and to build a trust bond between the sending organisation and the volunteer in order to maintain a qualitative relation during the service abroad.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Sharing necessary information regarding volunteering
- Maintaining the relations between volunteers (form a community)
- Building a trust-based relation between the sending organisation and the volunteer

/// DESCRIPTION

To reach the aims of this practice, we organise the group of volunteers by putting them together, following a prepared and organised program. The most important is to:

1. Answer the questions of the volunteers.
2. Create a calm and safe environment.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES?

The preparation of the PDT can take up to 4 months (preparing the google registration form, the materials for PDT, arranging food and accommodation, if needed).

The implementation can take 6 to 36 hours.

The evaluation with participants takes about an hour; separately, with the facilitating team, the evaluation takes up to 2 hours.

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

Regarding the logistic aspects, it must be prepared the google registration form, the materials for PDT. Arranging the meals, the accommodation or the transportation (if it’s the case) must be taken into consideration as well.

The materials needed depend on the program, but it is suggested to have a projector (for slides during the day and movies during the night for entertainment), a computer, some flipchart pieces of paper and markers, sticky notes, pens, and the participants list.

/// DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

Facebook and Instagram, encourage participants to share that on their personal walls.

/// TIPS

Choose a Saturday and make sure nobody has to “leave early” – the day is just for them. With that in mind, a 2-days pre-departure training is the best option, but a bit expensive.

Organise the PDT in August and have a clear date in January already so you can start informing participants to “save the date”.

It’s important to ask the participants to send you questions before the training, so you get the chance to prepare.

Let the receiving organizations know about your work and make them share materials on Facebook or other public pages.
4.1 CAFÉ KALANGUES

WHOLE PROJECT /// HORS PISTES

We created this project because we needed to strengthen the links between our international volunteers and the local community, and to promote our activities related to the field of mobility.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Strengthening the link between the international volunteers and the local community in Marseille
- Promoting the mobility activities
- Creating a space where our volunteers and people from the local community can exchange their languages and cultures
- Promoting our local activities and our local network
- Reinforcing the link between the volunteers that are hosted in Marseille

/// DESCRIPTION

First of all, a very important point is that since few years, this project is totally run by the local and international volunteers (if it’s needed, the employees of the Hors Pistes team can help or support). They are a team of 5-10 persons from different organisations that are members of the CAMI (Coordination des acteurs de la mobilité internationale), our local network of mobility actors.

It is a public event, taking place during the evening twice a month in an Egyptian cultural centre very close to our office. The team which is in charge of the communication is very active in different local networks. This public dimension allows us to have a very large public (between 20 and 60 participants per edition) from very different social categories of the city (workers, students, tourists…).

This contact between the international volunteers who are running all the activities and the large public is a very good way to strengthen the link between us and the local community. Also, during the sessions, there is a sharing time, when the volunteers share their experiences of volunteering, so it is also a good way to promote our mobility projects.

All the activities are facilitated by the volunteers. Each volunteer facilitates linguistic animations around a table, to initiate the public to his/her mother tongue, and talk about his/her country. All the activities are based on non-formal education methods. The fact that the whole project is run only by volunteers is a very nice way to reinforce the links inside the group of the volunteers, hosted by different organisations.

Steps of the process:

During the preparation meetings, the volunteers organise different tables, depending on the availability of everyone and the possible guests (for example, once a month there is special edition related to themes like: African, Asian, Arabic languages, Valentine’s day edition, Christmas etc…) and prepare different activities. They also have a strong communication through Facebook posts or video teasers (in which there is an introduction about the thematic of the next session) on the social networks (Instagram, Facebook etc).

During the activity, the public is invited to choose a table and sit with other interested people. Then they can participate to the activities prepared by the volunteer who is “running the table”. They can change the table whenever they want. The aim of these activities is not only to learn about linguistics, but also to exchange cultural aspects and some history about the country which the volunteer comes from.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES ?

Preparation : the volunteers meet each other two times between each session (2-hour meetings).

Implementation : the session takes 2 hours (from 6 to 8 pm).

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

We have this very nice opportunity to be in a partnership with the cultural centre “Nour d’Egypte” which is hosting us every time. There is a coffee place where people can order tea, things to eat etc… We don’t have to pay for it, but if the implementation is held in another place, it would be better to think about a place where people can seat comfortably and drink something in order to have this “coffee mood”.

/// DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

There is a lot of communication before and after each session. The Kafé Calangues has its own Facebook and Instagram account.

/// TIPS

It is good that the project is run only by the volunteers (with the support of the team if it’s needed). It allows a great connection into the organisational group and a really free mind initiative.

The Good
The Youth &
The Volunteer

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4.2 STYLE OF LEADERSHIP

WHOLE PROJECT // TRATWA

In an international environment with people with different backgrounds, it is important to try and implement certain leadership styles, so each person understands which is the resonating structure that fits better. By analyzing together, the results of this practice, the volunteers will know how to approach the future opportunities or future jobs: some persons fit into the corporation system, while others enjoy having more freedom in their hands.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

-To create a specific dynamic in the long-term volunteering project
-To provide clear expectations and to have a better understanding of the different tasks
-To observe, analyze and evaluate the different stages of the project

/// DESCRIPTION

We decided to implement this practice because of the different activities that occurred in our project. Sometimes our team has to do more physical work, so each individual has his/her specific task. In order to achieve our goals, an authoritarian style of leadership is required for better results. The democratic style has also an important role when we are creating and running workshops and activities in «Let’s go with ideas» project frame. Group members feel more engaged and motivated by having the power of decision-making.

Moreover, in our project there is also space for exercising the laissez-faire leadership style. This style is mostly applied in last period of time of our project, when volunteers are able to take more decisions on their own and to assume responsibility. Taking this into consideration, the results are beyond our expectations: volunteers from our project manage to create amazing individual projects, engaging the local community, other NGOs or schools from the region.

In order to be fully aware of the learning process that we are implementing and controlling, our team is constantly observing how the volunteers are acting and feeling in the relation with our frame work. The evaluations are taking place after different stages have been completed and we are able to analyze and improve our style of leadership, all based on the results and participants feedbacks.

This practice should be one of the abilities of a project coordinator and his/her team. A coordinator should be able to analyze his/her team and to apply flexible structures based on the needs of the team members. Frameworks you should know about leadership styles:

Authoritarian Leadership, also known as autocratic leaders, provide clear expectations for what needs to be done when it should be done, and how it should be done. This style of leadership is strongly focused on both command by the leader and control of the followers. There is also a clear division between the leader and the members. Authoritarian leaders make decisions independently with little or no input from the rest of the group. Authoritarian leadership is best applied to situations where there is little time for group decision-making or where the leader is the most knowledgeable member of the group. The autocratic approach can be a good one when the situation calls for rapid decisions and decisive actions. However, it tends to create dysfunctional and even hostile environments, often pitting followers against the dominating leader.

Democratic leaders offer guidance to group members, but they also participate in the group and allow input from other group members. In Lewin’s study, children in this group were less productive than the members of the authoritarian group, but their contributions were of a higher quality. Participative leaders encourage group members to participate but retain the final say in the decision-making process. Group members feel engaged in the process and are more motivated and creative. Democratic leaders tend to make followers feel like they are an important part of the team, which helps foster commitment to the goals of the group.

Laissez-Faire. Researchers found that children under delegative leadership, also known as laissez-faire leadership, were the least productive of all three groups. The children in this group also made more demands on the leader, showed little cooperation, and were unable to work independently. Delegative leaders offer little or no guidance to group members and leave decision-making up to group members. While this style can be useful in situations involving highly qualified experts, it often leads to poorly defined roles and a lack of motivation. On the other side, this style fits very well with persons that are independent and they are having better results.

When preparing a certain structure of implementing the styles of leadership, our main guide is the entire frame work of the project’s activities. Based on our experiences, we learned during the last years what dynamic is the most encountered and obvious and we discovered a clear “path” that every generation took, with additional inside projects or opportunities that occurred. In this way, we are choosing the leadership approach for the different project stages from the beginning, everything in concordance with the level of tasks and goals that we established. In order to be fully aware of the learning process that we are implementing and controlling, our team is constantly observing how the volunteers are acting and feeling in the relation with our frame work. The evaluations are taking place after different stages have been completed and we are able to analyze and improve or change our style of leadership, all based on the results and participants feedbacks.

/// TIPS

A good observation of the group dynamic and social backgrounds should lead you to a good decision in choosing the leadership style. Be aware of the risks when acting in accordance with the leadership way and make evaluations. Check the level of motivation, personal development and attitude of the participants regarding their involvement.
This has been a result of one-and-a-half-year project for people who have willingness, motivation, time and the ability to support European volunteers during their volunteering projects. This Treasurebox provides necessary knowledge, inspiration and practical means to provide quality support for the European volunteers, to reach the main objectives of volunteering projects, enjoying the process and sharing common ground.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Building positive relationships within the volunteering project team
- Supporting personal and emotional wellbeing
- Problem solving
- Supporting personal development and the learning process

/// DESCRIPTION

This publication contains useful information related to the mentoring processes in European cross-border volunteering projects, as well as several tools created to help all those engaged in supporting volunteers - those who we call support persons, including mentors, in their activities with the European volunteers, in different phases of the project.

/// DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

The Treasurebox includes a series of activities, workshops, methods and tools for everyone to follow.

It is all written and ready to be downloaded from the Facebook link:

https://www.facebook.com/evsrealm/
TWIST AND SHAPE YOURSELF

WHOLE PROJECT /// P.E.CO. - PROGETTI EUROPEI DI COOPERAZIONE

This methodology aims to identify, assess and recognize the capacities, skills, abilities and knowledge that we acquired through life experiences. In the field of youth work, it is important to validate the learning process and to identify how it was acquired and which competences have been developed; in particular because, unfortunately, not always non-formal education certifications are recognized outside of this sector. We believe that this method is particularly suitable for helping volunteers to believe and to give the proper value to non-formal competences acquired during the project.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of this practice is to involve volunteers in a path that leads them to a renewed awareness of their competences and support them in the preparation of the Youthpass.

/// DESCRIPTION

“The Reconnaissance des Acquis,”, which literally means “recognition of acquired skills”, is a methodological approach that takes place through individual and collective paths, designed to bring out, to structure, to evaluate and reinvest in a project the competences and processes acquired during the course of life through more and diverse experiences.

The “Reconnaissance des Acquis” regards the fellow carrier of potential and resources and aims at involving the whole human being, with its complexity, in a process of retelling his/her history, his/her relationship with knowledge, his/her construction of awareness. This method was born in France in the 1980s and has been applied to the employment field in order to help the staff and unemployed people thinking about their competences, skills, strengths and weaknesses points. It is focused on how specific competences have been acquired and on why people made specific choices. We adapted it to the volunteering program. We adjusted the methodology and proposed it in a 5-pillar form:

1. Define your objectives – focusing the attention on what we really want and obtain.
2. Create your “river of learning” – putting emphasis on what has been important for the personal development: books, experiences, people (not necessarily related to formal education).
3. Share your experiences.
4. Define your mainstays.
5. Create your Portfolio. We advise to perform step 1 and 2 during the on-arrival training, steps 3 and 4 during the volunteering experience and step 5 during the final evaluation.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES?

To prepare the activity you need a couple of hours (setting materials, prepare a good background music, search for introductory methods to break the ice, in case the volunteers do not know each other). The duration depends on how long they speak; however, at least 2 hours per session are needed.

/// MATERIAL NEEDED

In terms of materials, you need pictures (they can bring some pics from home that have value for them, otherwise you can use magazines), scissors, blank papers of different sizes, glue, tape, colours (everything that can help them to be creative) and a big envelope to put everything inside. They can also bring an important object for them so they can start sharing something about their past experiences.

Regarding the human resources, you need one facilitator, ideally not directly involved in the activities. In terms of steps, the practice is divided in three moments: on arrival training, midterm and final evaluation and you can hand in some materials for self-reflection, too.

/// DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

We have organized a Training Course for mentors and coordinators in December 2016, where we shared the method and then published the info kit on our Facebook page and on SALTO


We are continuing to apply it and promoting it as good practice with our volunteers and partners.

/// TIPS

Don’t rush: given its simplicity, it can be used with volunteers with all backgrounds (just pay attention if you have different profiles together as some of them can could feel «less» than the others or could not feel at ease). In our case, we had as well very emotional moments, so be prepared to be able to manage strong feelings.
WORKING WITH PARTNERS

WHOLE PROJECT /// NGO ACTIO CATHOLICA PATRIA

Providing trainings and evaluation for the hosting partners. Strengthening tutors in their roles and positions. Keeping in touch with the partner organisations during the whole duration of the project. We have started doing this to increase the quality of volunteering experience for both, the volunteer and the receiving organization.

/// AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Preparing, guiding and strengthening tutors in their roles
- Knowing the situation in the hosting organisation (struggles and success - project quality)
- Gathering information for the project reports
- Future collaboration possibilities between supporting and receiving organisations

/// DESCRIPTION

The volunteers centre of our organisation provides hosting organisation tutors trainings on regular bases (every three months common meetings for all partner organizations – local, international, national volunteering programs) ; additionally, we organize special trainings only for hosting organisation to clarify more technical and/or project related issues (once or twice per year).

The coordinator visits the hosting organisation two times during the project to evaluate, know the situations and get an idea regarding the struggles and the joys, and in which areas the hosting organisation needs strengthening.

The volunteers’ mentors give regular support to the hosting organisation tutors according to their needs and situations ; moreover, they organize meetings with the tutors and volunteers, if they wish. Mentors report back to the project coordinator in monthly protocols or verbal in urgent situations.

/// HOW MUCH TIME DOES THIS PRACTICE TAKES ?

Preparation : In most cases, this is a continuous process. Organisations that receive volunteers are always in touch with coordinators involved in the preparation process to receive the volunteers, make schedules, prepare internally for the arrival.

Implementation : quarterly meetings.

Evaluation : constant feedback.
This Quality Charter was built in June 2019 during the **final Seminar of the project “The Good, the Youth and the Volunteer”,** in Marseille. Our wish was to define together with our partners - used to work together on European volunteering projects (EVS, ESC) - the Quality Standards that need to be reached for each volunteering mission.

Through a collective brainstorming activity, we have identified for each phase of the project (before, during and after the mission) the role and tasks of each involved stakeholder of the process : sending organisation, hosting organisation and coordinating organisation.

During the creation of this charter, all the participants of the seminar have been involved: EVS/ESC coordinators, hosting organisations and volunteers in order to gather the different points of view, expertises, experiences and backgrounds related to volunteering projects.

This Quality Charter is to be implemented between the GYV partners in future volunteering projects, as partnership bases. It can be used by other organisations as guidelines in the field of European volunteering, as sending, coordinating or hosting organisations.
BEFORE THE MISSION

THE COORDINATING ORGANISATION SHOULD:

- Plan the project with the sending organisation (S.O), define together a timeline for the selection (with or without the support of the sending organization) and how to select the participants.

- Send information about the project to S.O, at least one month before the start of the mission, to allow time to find participants, and not more than 4 months before the start of the mission, to not loose volunteers and motivation. Information needed: mission description, clear timeline, accommodation details, person contact, mentoring/tutoring process... And if possible, testimony or propose a skype with former volunteers.

- Identify the responsible person in the S.O and keep up the communication. The C.O needs to know who to contact directly about the mission, and needs to be updated in case of change.

- Meet with the hosting organisation (H.O) (if different) to agree on the frame of the mission, responsibilities, contents, logistics, and define together an agreement to sign.

- Define who is responsible for the wellbeing of the mission. Identify one or a few person in charge of the wellbeing of different aspects of the volunteering mission: tasks, learnings, social life and integration, logistics and budget.

- Share a check list of things to be done by the S.O before the beginning of the mission. In the check list, to have at least: the ESC number, CIGNA procedure, European Health Insurance Card, preparation process for the experience, travel arrangements, info pack, activity agreement (read it and explain it to the volunteer).

THE SENDING ORGANISATION SHOULD:

- Advertise partner’s call for a mission and carry out a pre-selection of candidates volunteers, if not selected through ESC platform.

- Make sure they have received a relevant information about the mission to better support the volunteer.

- During the selection phase, makes sure that candidates understand all steps (pre-selection, selection, etc...)

- Ideally, participates in Skype call for selection with the volunteer and the receiving organization (especially for young with fewer opportunities).

- Makes sure they receive the volunteering agreement and the partner agreement before the selection.

- After the selection and before the departure, send to the volunteer and email with: useful links and additional information, information about CIGNA and ESC number, emergency contact, travel information, information about volunteering agreement.

- Enroll the volunteer in CIGNA system and makes sure he/she receive the code, than share it with the C.O.

- Set up a face to face pre-departure training, which can be done in a group with other volunteers, ideally. How to do a good pre-departure training: getting to know each other’s, talk about ESC, CIGNA and agreements, share fears expectations and contributions, give information about youthpass, cultural shock preparation, how to stay safe, explain role of each organization, stress importance of keeping contacts, make pictures and disseminate online.

THE HOSTING ORGANISATION SHOULD

- Get the quality label, with the help of the C.O.

- Define clear tasks to give to the volunteer, each year. Also think about a possible schedule including time for the personal project. Need also to be flexible and adapt the mission of the needs, propositions from the volunteers.

- Inform the whole team that a volunteer will arrive. Explain what a volunteer is and be aware of possible changes in the team.

- Find a motivated tutor, who has time for it.

- Find a decent flat with the small budget (except if the C.O is doing it). If you already have a flat, ask the previous volunteers to clean it, but check after.

- Do the selection interviews with the C.O and choose the volunteer.

- Organize the arrival of the volunteer with the team, the tutor and the C.O.

- Prepare a guide that will present your organization to the new volunteer: the history, the team, the actions, the vocabulary your team is using daily etc... It’s possible to ask the previous volunteers to prepare the guide.

- Sign an agreement with the C.O (financial, roles, logistics...), and a contract with C.O, S.O and the volunteer.
DURING THE MISSION

THE COORDINATING ORGANISATION SHOULD:

- At the beginning of the mission, clarify with the volunteer the roles of actors, to understand the responsibility of each stakeholder.
- Build the trust with the volunteer: have informal moments shared from the beginning, and give space to the volunteer to express him/herself.
- Ensure the learning process: cover the help needed by the mentor, tutor, H.O or S.O. Introduce and help to fill the youthpass.
- Ask the volunteer to send a postcard to his/her S.O
- Send to the S.O short updates about volunteers: define together the regularity and the form of these reports and use them in case of emergency. Update S.O also about projects (clarify the common/next projects).
- Ensure a good introduction in the H.O at the arrival
- Follow the mission with the H.O: go for visits, improve the tutoring by trainings for the hosting tutors, give to the tutors space to express themselves.

THE SENDING ORGANISATION SHOULD:

- Follow-up of the volunteer: follow-up of the personal life (integration, ...) of the volunteer in his/her new life environment, make a follow-up focused on skills development as well (in order to make the volunteer reflect about what is happening).
- Make regular evaluations: using questionnaires, reflection tools, skype interviews...
- Be present for mediation if needed: intervene in case of conflict between the volunteer, the coordinating organisation and the hosting organisation.
- Keep communication flow with the volunteer and the hosting/coordinating organisations
- Check-up of the volunteer’s projects: speak about the return of the volunteer in his/her own country: future plans, reverse culture shock...
- Consider the different needs of different volunteers, offer support.

THE HOSTING ORGANISATION SHOULD:

- Introduce the volunteer to the organisation, local community and the city.
- Schedule the tasks: explain it well from the beginning, and be clear with the personal project (be sure there is place for it).
- Plan a tutoring meeting at least once a month: discuss about the learning process and evaluate the project, the mission etc... At the beginning it’s recommended to make meetings more often and stay flexible during the mission.
- Plan the Youthpass process: in SALTO, there are good guides with tools and methods.
- Meet the volunteer, mentor and tutor all together 2-3 times per year to clarify how everything is going, make personal contact, evaluation...
- Disseminate the project, and share it with the S.O, so they can also publish stuffs. The volunteers should be ambassadors of the international volunteering!
- Write a reference letter at the end of the mission, from the head of the organisation about the volunteer’s competences that can be useful for future employability and for accompanying the YouthPass.
AFTER THE MISSION

THE COORDINATING ORGANISATION SHOULD:

- Centralize and put in common the feedback from the volunteer, S.O, H.O, hosting partners, and the beneficiaries of the activities.
- Arrange all reimbursements
- Makes sure the H.O and the volunteer have completed the mobility tool report as accurate as possible.
- Monitor that H.O is disseminating the impact of the activities during the project (as agreed in the application stage).
- Share the results of the project with all the partners or stakeholders (after collecting the evaluation feedbacks) : S.O, H.O, hosting partners, database of volunteers and any other networking platform they have.

THE SENDING ORGANISATION SHOULD:

- Send a personalized e-mail to the volunteer with an invitation to a face-to-face meeting (or at worst case a skype call) with a couple of date options.
- Organize an individual evaluation meeting with structured questions (feedback about receiving organisation, achieving goals set before departure, future plans, suggestions for improvements etc…) and free chat.
- Do a final evaluation between the S.O and the H.O/C.O by email, skype or via a form (provided by the C.O/H.O).
- Involve the volunteer in events organized by the S.O in order to share the volunteering experience.
- Invite the volunteer to follow-up events organized by the National Agency.

THE HOSTING ORGANISATION SHOULD:

- Keep contact with the volunteer. Make sure that the volunteer handles well the return and check his/her situation after departure.
- Support the volunteer to be an ESC ambassador, help him/her to realize his/her own potential of dissemination to community. Provide resources to act : prepare a list of links that could be used by the volunteer after the mission for dissemination.
- Organize an evaluation meeting with the persons participating in the hosting process (mentors, tutors, colleagues, public…) and ask about achievements, difficulties, improvements, if every participant felt involved and comfortable and adopt the plans for the next projects.