



EVS Projects in Western and South-East Europe 2007

Description of YAP Italy hosting project

Location:

Rome – National Secretariat of Youth Action for Peace Italy

Project environment:

YAP Italia is a member of the international movement Youth Action for Peace. Both through our own collaborations on national and local level and through a wide network on an international level, we are especially active in the field of international volunteering, youth mobility, peace education, interculturality and conflict management. The organisation aims at making sure that all young people, therefore also those disadvantaged or disabled, are aware about the changes that surround them on a local and global level. We also want to offer training in order to try to transform society through an active participation process. The organisation also works to contrast, through peaceful means, all forms of violence, injustice, exploitation and exclusion, all forms of oppression and inequality and we develop our activities in order to support all those who want to participate in a collective and responsible process of social development.

Our main activities are:

- International workcamps, hosting international young people in Italy and sending Italian young people abroad.
- Training towards volunteering (short and long term)
- Trainings for intercultural animators.
- Targeted seminars and trainings on several themes linked to our national and international work environment (peace, interculturality, exclusion and inclusion, immigration, conflict management, equal opportunities).
- Youth exchanges.
- Support to local projects (Latium and other regions in Italy) through sending and hosting short, mid and long term volunteers, through offering our experience in the implementation of projects and through our international contacts network.

- Awareness raising and information campaigns.

YAP Italia is an organisation based on the volunteers participation and the work offered by our own active members, it employs personnel only when necessary and only for specific tasks or projects.

Through their participation our members guarantee the daily opening of the Roman headquarters and the development / monitoring of ongoing or in preparation projects. The profile of the members is very large, YAP involves both young people getting in touch with civil society and people with a high profile regarding international volunteering and global politics (university students, project writers, linguists, computer experts etc.). All members contribute according to their profile to guarantee stability and development. Our activities are open to all people, according to the sector where people want to get involved. Regarding international activities the average age is in between 18 and 35, and on a national level other age categories are more present as well (especially in our partner organisations).

Tendentially, the profile of the organisation is very internationalised and it is common to encounter people from all over the planet while in our office (in the Roman headquarters we usually communicate in at least 4 languages).

The Roman headquarters is in the outskirts of Rome, an area called Cinecittà, **one of the most degraded areas in town (urban and social degradation)**. The project will take place in a highly intercultural and dynamic context and implies the participation of the volunteer in several activities organised in the headquarters: trainings for intercultural animators, international volunteering, newsletter, website updating, creating and preparing those projects information and promotion projects concerning the activities offered by our association, by our partners, by the platforms we are member of, by the European Union, by the Council of Europe. The office daily hosts a certain number of active members and volunteers involved in our projects. This is where we give information from (directly, via phone or email), this is where we organise our campaigns and out courses, this is where we meet with our local partners and this is where we keep in touch with the international networks we are part of.

The office is a place where volunteers can use internet to gather information, to research on youth issues, etc. It is a place where our members are available to support others in creating and implementing their projects. The organisation has already hosted international volunteers and EVS volunteers in the past, in Rome, and we believe that the experience was very fruitful and that these experiences have contributed to the development of the organisation and its members. Undoubtedly, the presence of international volunteers has allows us to have a privileged access to the needs and wished of young people, and therefore the activities we propose to the community have enriched the general experience.

Tasks of the volunteer:

The first part of the project will be dedicated to the introduction to the activity (about 10 days): the volunteer will be followed upon by an active member and he/she will discover how the international and the national organisation function, what activities we implement. He/she will receive information and discover the town, the neighbourhood and will start a process of getting closer to the techniques used in the implementation of daily and punctual activities. He/she will start getting to know our partners, the ongoing projects, and projectuality.

The volunteer will be involved in the following activities:

- writing, implementing, diffusing the newsletter on a local (in Italian) and international (in English) context. The volunteers will be responsible of the collection and editing of the articles. The newsletter goes out each three months (in the case of their project it will go out in December 2006, March and June 2007).
- contribute to the creation of and distribute promotion and information materials, on paper and through our web-site. The volunteer will distribute information in our office and in other meeting locations: schools, universities, social centres etc. The volunteer will take care of the preparation of all the material we have to send to our local partners all over the year in co-ordination with our external communication responsible. Finally and most important, the volunteer will learn how to update our web-site by searching information that may interest young people and by publishing the different activity proposal YAP has for its members. The volunteer will do so with the support and the supervision of one of our responsible.
- contribute to the organisation of information activities linked to the issues addressed by the organisation (see point A). These sessions will take place in Rome in the youth information centres, in the headquarters of our local partners and in other locations where it is possible to encounter young people. It is not possible at the moment to say how many meeting will be held during the project period as our partners normally contact us only few weeks before the meeting itself.
- participate to one or two training for intercultural animators and work-camp leaders (first of all the volunteer will be participants him/herself and then will acquire the skills to further disseminate this training as co-organisers) The volunteer will therefore have the chance to acquire non formal education skills, intercultural group management skills, conflict management skills and information on most of the countries where YAP has partners. YAP It organises about two training per year, depending on the activity plan that our General Assembly will approve at the beginning of next year the volunteer will be able to have one or two training. In principle he/she will also be involved as co-leader in other national or international activities.
- co-coordinate and possibly co-ordinate one or more work-camps in Italy for a period of time between 2 and 3 weeks (this experience is both a logical consequence of the prior activity and a natural consequence of the context the volunteer is developing his/her activities in). *This part of the project is seen by us, as hosting organisation, one of the most important ones therefore we kindly ask you to apply for this project only if you are interested in work-camps and international young people exchange and if you know you can leave with a group of people from all over the world for couple of weeks in an intensive way!* For further information on what a work-camp is (in case you do not know it!) please consult your sending organisation, us or the following web-sites: www.yap.org, www.unesco.org/ccivs.

What can the volunteer learn through the voluntary service period?

The type of short term volunteering activities and youth exchanges allows the volunteer to develop information and campaigning tasks and to develop their own activities within the global context of the project. During their stay they will be followed upon by the responsible of the departments linked to their activities. This will allow the volunteers to acquire many skills and to enter in contact with different realities. They can acquire (in case they do not already possess) computer skills (by using traditional and innovative systems), language skills (Italian and English), specific skills linked to managing international groups, intercultural communication, group work, creating and implementing youth activities) and the skills to plan and manage personal initiatives.

All these skills will be acquired during the initial part of the project and throughout the project itself (the volunteers will be gradually introduced to all activities and followed upon by the various department responsible).

Experience demonstrates that volunteers will be totally integrated both in the global project and in the development of their personal project (beyond the activities proposed by the organisation the volunteers have the possibility to create and develop their own ideas, and receive support from the organisation) Their role inside the organisation is the same as an active member therefore they will become responsible of the activities. The volunteers will participate and they will integrate themselves in a system where everybody is responsible of their share of tasks and where everyone is aware of the importance of reliability and completing these tasks. If the activities are complex or the decisions to be taken are complex, the volunteers can always rely and consult the responsible.

The activities will be organised as follows:

At the beginning of the project, after the introduction part, the responsible and the volunteer will decide together how they should handle the time division for the activities (this will also take into consideration the calendar of the organisation, the newsletter deadline, the training and the coordination of national and international groups). If any activity, such as a work-camp or a seminar, takes place during week ends or does not allow the volunteer to have free days, they will establish with the project responsible how and when they can recuperate the hours in the preceding or the following days). Volunteers applying should be flexible in this sense and should consider that the hosting organisation will take into consideration their needs while asking to participate in this kind of activities. It can happen that activities takes place outside Rome, in this case travel expenses, board and lodging will be covered by us or the organisation on the spot.

Project responsible and mentor:

The volunteer will be followed by a main project responsible but he/she will also have contacts with other responsible inside the organisation. Each of them will support the volunteers during specific activities. The mentor will most probably be somebody who does not leave with the volunteer, this person will be at the disposal of the volunteer and the volunteer will be able to meet him/her on a regular basis (the frequency of the meetings will be established by the mentor and the volunteer upon arrival).

Accommodation, food and common life:

The volunteer will share a room with other volunteers and will share the apartment with Italian and international volunteers. The hosting organisation will provide, as all the other volunteers, with local

food (the volunteer will not receive money for the food but food directly!); meals will be organised together with the other volunteers according to a weekly schedule. In this sense it is important for us to clarify the following issues:

- collective life is part of the global project YAP Italy works on since the beginning of its history; collective life and sharing, in fact, allow each of us to learn more about each other, oneself, patience, tolerance and participation.
- In this sense for us it is important to organise meals and cleanings together (based on a schedule) and to try to be members of a community for a while. Preparation of personal meals will be accepted only because of specific situations.
- YAP Italy will provide Italian food according to the local possibilities and the local traditions, please consider it while applying. The hosting organisation is sensitive toward any special needs (diet, health, political or ethical choices etc).
- All the inhabitants of the house are asked to participate to the cleanings and the daily life organisation. The apartment you will share with others for a while is for us an important tool and each volunteer is responsible for its maintenance and care. No one individual, from the permanent volunteers nor the organisation co-ordinators, is solely responsible for the cleanings more than other volunteers.
- If you use the office for professional and personal reasons you will also be asked to contribute to the cleanings and to keep the place tidy and clean.
- No calls to international numbers or mobile phones are allowed from the office phones. You will be able to buy a phone card but not to call on YAP Italy expenses.
- No noise is allowed from 21.00 to 8.00 in the morning, we live in a common building and we do not have the right to bother our neighbours.
- Guests have to be announced to the organisation responsible whom will give an answer or the possibility to have a guest in the requested period and each of them has to contribute to the food and the running expenses for the time s/he stays. It's the volunteer's responsibility to make sure that the guest(s) participates to the cleaning and the daily organisation.

Language course:

The language course will be provided by a teacher that normally works on a voluntary service basis. They will most probably be for about 2 months (to be confirmed with YAP IT). Classes and meetings with the teacher will be agreed upon with the volunteer just before starting the courses. Language courses will be provided in order to give to the volunteer the possibility to communicate and to be effective during the project activities. Language courses on the framework of an EVS project should not be seen as professional courses somebody follows in order to pass an exam or to get a certificate. Indeed, and if you are interested in this type of exams and courses, the organisation will provide with all the information regarding schools and institutes where you could pass those exams.