



REPORT

EVS **On-arrival** training

28.9. -2.10.2006.

Beograd, Serbia



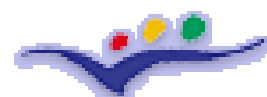
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Education and Culture



EVS On-arrival training

Beograd, 28.9. -2.10.2006.

Trainers' report

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Some background information about On Arrival Training

On Arrival Training for EVS volunteers is an essential part of the EVS training cycle. It is the first training that EVS volunteers should get upon the arrival to the host country.

The main aim of On-arrival training is to support EVS volunteers for their stay in the host country and their project environment. In particular, the On arrival training aims at helping EVS volunteers in dealing with (inter) cultural and personal challenges during the service and facilitating the creation of "support network" amongst the volunteers staying in the region. The On arrival training encourages volunteers to think about their EVS as a learning process and provides opportunity for defining their own learning objectives.

It was the second time for "Hajde da..." group to organize this training, although its trainers had done it before for SALTO-YOUTH SEE Resource Centre¹.

The group of participants was consisted of 7 EVS volunteers from Germany, Sweden and France, doing their voluntary service in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Training Objectives

- To evaluate and reflect on volunteer's experience in their host organizations
- To raise awareness about intercultural learning processes during EVS
- To explore potential conflict issues and practice conflict management strategies
- To support volunteer's learning process during EVS
- To provide participants with updated and accurate information about EVS, YOUTH programme and future Youth in Action programme

Methodology and Content

Overall methodology used in this course was based on European practice of non-formal education with young people. It is a combination between theoretical inputs, personal reflections, group discussions and interactive exercises. The overall approach tends to support active participation of learners, use cooperative learning and group/personal experiences as a starting point for the learning process.

The content of the programme has been created in accordance with the Guidelines and Minimum quality standards defined by the European Commission in November 2004².

The programme outline is presented in the attachment.

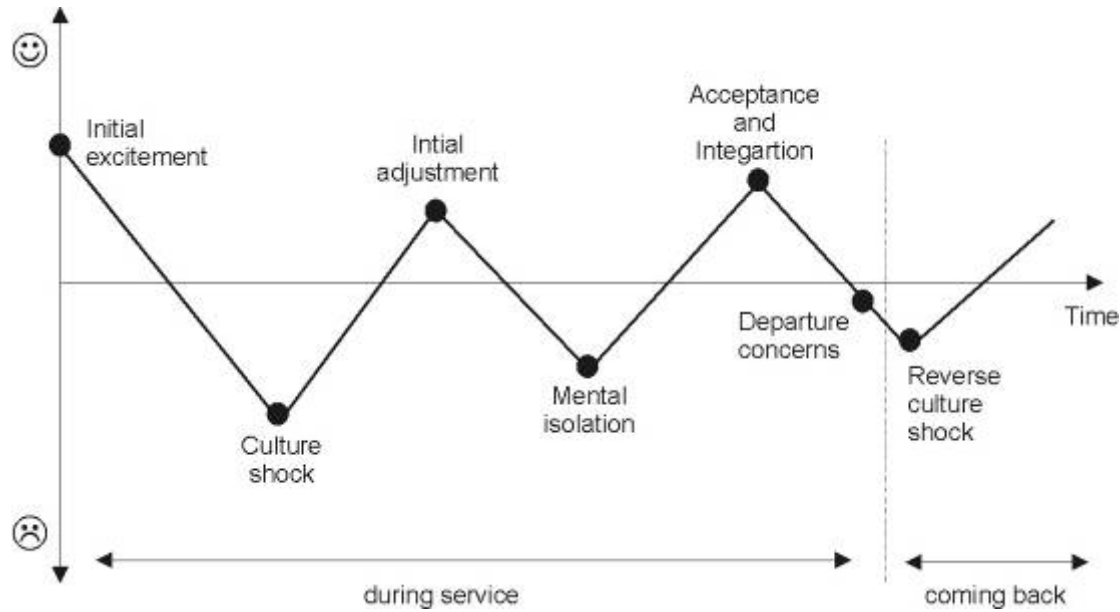
¹ For more references about previous On-arrival training courses done by our trainers, see the reports on the SALTO website at <http://www.salto-youth.net/seeEVS/> or visit „Hajde da..." group webpage at <http://www.hajdeda.org.yu/omladina/index.htm#1>

² The guidelines and minimum standards for EVS volunteer training sessions can be downloaded from: http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/program/sos/vh_studies_en.html



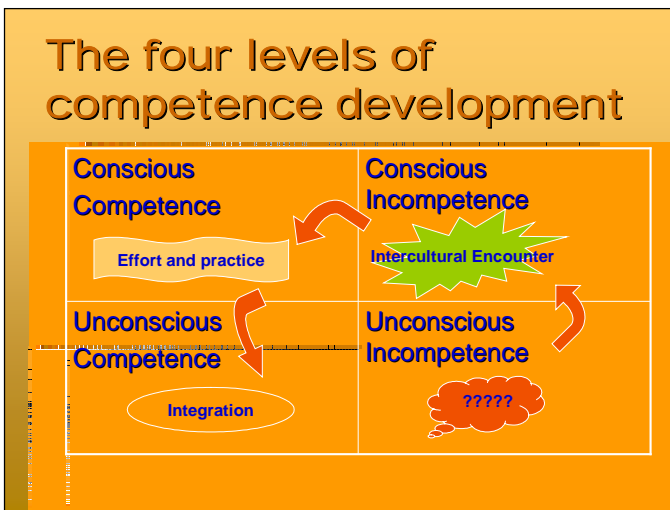
Highlights from the process

In the very beginning of each On Arrival Training it is important to provide participants with the opportunity to share their first impressions about the host countries and cultures. It is the moment for participants to share stories, look for similarities, explore differences and tell how they are dealing with cultural diversity. From the training perspective, it is important to introduce the concepts of cultural adjustment and culture shock, explaining that both (emotional) ups and downs are *normal* part of the process of cultural adjustment, which normally takes time! This process, reported by many former volunteers, could be metaphorically presented as “riding in a roller coaster” (picture 1).



Picture 1: A ride on a roller coaster - the curve of “cultural adaptation” (adapted from the ICYE materials)

In the second part of the process, we have explored the volunteers' satisfaction with the situation in their host projects. It was the moment for the participants to share their impressions and expectations about their host organizations, starting from the welcome, to practical arrangements, language training, relation with mentors and supervisors. It was the moment to clarify the roles represented by the triangle of sending organization – host organization and volunteer, as well as to clarify the roles of mentor and supervisor in the host project.



Picture 2: Four levels of (intercultural) competence development

The second day morning of the On Arrival training was focused on deeper understanding of culture and intercultural learning. It was the possibility for EVS volunteers to dig deeper into the roots of their “cultural icebergs” and try to get some initial under sting of how they engage in the process of intercultural communication with people from the host countries. The meaning of intercultural learning was explored in



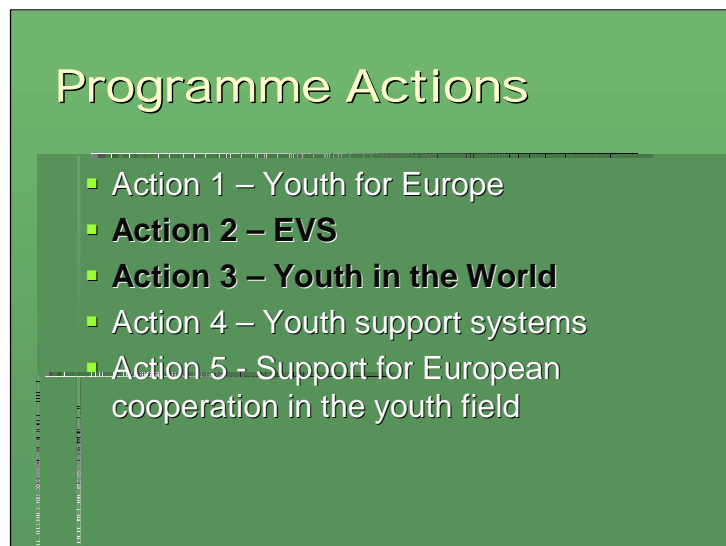
depth and the volunteers have been encouraged to engage actively in that process and work consciously on development of their intercultural competences (picture 2). It was emphasised that the best possible (if not only) way to develop the intercultural competences is through living intercultural experience. And what are these competences? Our participants thought about:

- ✓ Openness / tolerance towards other's opinions and behaviour (different than ours)
- ✓ Being able to listen
- ✓ Being able to ask (not to be shy to ask)
- ✓ Capacity to make intercultural contact / conversation
- ✓ Self – awareness
- ✓ Knowing language!
- ✓ Understanding non-verbal communication
- ✓ Empathy
- ✓ Being interested in people

The afternoon of the second day was dedicated to clarification of Rights and Responsibilities of EVS volunteers and learning about effective conflict management.

The topic of conflict was approached by a combination of group discussions, theoretical inputs from conflict theory and practical work on EVS conflict situations using the magic of the *Forum Theatre*. At the end of the day we just touched the topic of constructive approaches to conflict by naming one – WIN WIN approach.

The last day of the course was focused on looking at EVS as a learning process, assisting volunteers to define their own learning objectives for their service in the areas of personal, professional and project related learning. We find it as very important for the volunteers to be aware of their learning objectives, thus having possibility to monitor and manage their learning during their stay in the host country.



During this day, all questions and doubts regarding EVS have been answered and the volunteers got the latest information about the possibilities in the future Youth in Action programme.

Finally, the participants had the opportunity to share what they would like to give and what they would need from the others, thus starting to build the support EVS network for their stay in South East Europe...

Picture 3: Five Actions of the Youth in Action programme



Some of **the needs** our volunteers expressed at the end:

- To stay in contact with other volunteers
- To exchange information with others (good food, music, bears.??)
- For Travel partners
- For someone who listen (Listen partner)
- To Exchange Photos
- Help in conflict management

Some of **the offers** to others in the group were:

- To be a guide in host town
- Place to sleep
- Support, friendship, smile
- Ear to hear
- Bear

From participants' evaluation

In the middle of the training, after knowing each other, presenting first impressions about host country and talks about first days and weeks in their host organizations, sharing difficulties and potential challenges, we have done short evaluation. Some of the statements at that point were:

- I liked sharing our impressions about the country
- I find cultural adaptation curve very important
- It is good to hear that everybody has same/similar problems
- My messages, so far is, do not give up
- I realized that we are not all in the same phase of the service, things are going to happen in time, believe



At the end of the training we used evaluation method we call Target. It is combination of individual written evaluation that gives group, as well, a chance to discuss and give some comments.

The circle of the Target was divided in 6 fields (connected with 6 questions) and each could be answered and comment in two ways: by putting a sign in one of 3 circles (central circle- **very much**, middle circle- **ok**, outside circle-**not at all**).

Field of fulfilled expectations

It seems that participants had more questions than this one 3 days training could give them all the answers. One volunteer felt that during the training all the questions had been answered, for all the others it was OK, but some of the questions remained opened (need to check with sending organization, host, local police and laws...)

Field of methods used

More than half of the group liked methods very much. It could be expected considering that training methodology was fully based on non-formal education for young people. The rest of the group was somewhere in the middle with more like/less like some concrete techniques and activities (energisers, name games, looking for one answer approach ..).

**Field of trainer's approach**

Everybody liked very much trainer's approach. They said it was motivating.

Field of learning process for you

Half of the group felt that the training was very much a personal learning experience for them. For the other half it was OK. One of the important things that make some of the questions unanswered was the fact that these are one of the last generations of the "old" Youth programme and people are very much interesting how the new will look like and what will be their possibilities/or not in it.

Field informal time

The whole group was very satisfied with how they spent informal time.

Field of satisfaction with a group

Everybody felt good and supported in a group and liked it very much. Planning for travelling together through Balkans started ☺

Main learning outcomes of the training

- The volunteers had the opportunity to share impressions and learn about the host countries/cultures
- The volunteers had a safe space to reflect on the situation in their host organizations
- The level of the volunteers' cultural (self-) awareness had increased
- The participants' knowledge of intercultural learning processes had improved
- The participants' understanding of conflict had improved
- Their understanding of EVS as a learning process had deepened
- Awareness and clarity of personal learning objectives during service had increased
- An opportunity for important contact and a support network between the volunteers had been made
- Their knowledge of support structures to Youth Program in Balkans had increased (SALTO-YOUTH RC, Contact Points) and last information about Youth in Actions had been gained



	Thursday, 28.9.	Friday, 29.9.	Saturday, 30.9.	Sunday, 1.10.	Monday, 2.10.
morning	Arrival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walking together ▪ Intro to training ▪ Questions ▪ Warming up for EVS... ▪ Mapping the YOUTH programme ▪ Actors ▪ Cultural awareness ▪ Impressions about host countries ▪ Cultural adaptation 	EVS as an opportunity for Intercultural Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Looking into the future: ▪ A perfect EVS day ▪ EVS as a learning process ▪ EVS philosophy ▪ Setting objectives for my voluntary service 	Departure
afternoon	Welcome afternoon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ get to know ▪ practical information 	Volunteer and Hosting organisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ first experiences ▪ Role of the volunteer in organisational structures Daily evaluation	Rights and responsibilities of EVS volunteers Conflict management in theory and practice Daily evaluation	Youth in Action Questions and answers Networking and further resources through EVS Evaluation of the training	
evening		EVS to EVS / guided tour to Belgrade	Dinner in Town		