

Davide di Pietro

STILL ACTIVE!

INTERNATIONAL
VOLUNTARY SERVICE
PROPOSALS FOR
SENIOR CITIZENS

handbook for volunteers



European Commission
Socrates Programme

Lunaria

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Senior Volunteers Programme Handbook for volunteers: a short introduction	4
PART 1 Introduction to a possible European Senior Volunteers Programme	
1.1 Background	5
1.2 A strategy to enhance active citizenship	5
1.3 Past projects - What has been already done	6
1.4 Intercultural learning and intergeneration action	7
1.5 Where the whole thing is coming from: a bit of history	7
PART 2 Few considerations (hopefully) useful to volunteers	
2.1 Projects and requested skills	
2.2 When and where	8
2.3 Food and Accommodation	9
2.4 Language	10
2.5 The trip	11
2.6 How can I participate?	11
2.7 How much will it cost?	12
PART 3 5 Examples of past projects followed by reports from volunteers	
Project 1 EURAG, Graz, Austria	14
Project 2 Youth Action for Peace, Bedheim, Germany	16
Project 3 Tiszta Forrás Alapítvány, Budapest, Hungary	19
Project 4 The Monastery of St Francis and Gorton Trust, Manchester, United Kingdom	22
Project 5 Legambiente, Eboli, Italy	25
ANNEX 1 A proposal of Code of Conduct for international senior volunteers	29
ANNEX 2 International Voluntary Service Organisations with Mid-term placements possibilities for older volunteers	31

Senior Volunteers Programme

Handbook for volunteers: a short introduction

This booklet is devoted to all those seniors who could be interested in taking part in a project abroad as volunteers. In the past few years more than 300 volunteers decided to spend their time abroad and involve themselves in projects in another European country.

Where this proposal is coming from?

Starting from the concept of life long learning, we asked ourselves if the chances of understanding other cultures and expressing civil and social engagement provided by International voluntary service, could be an effective tool to promote and stimulate "active citizenship" among those who went outside the labour market. We believe that people are never too old to learn and that education should be part of everyone's retirement years.

From this assumption we started the transnational project named "Mobility 55" few years ago. We proposed short-term experiences of informal education, job training, cultural deepening and exchange of life experiences through voluntary service activities.

In 2003 we continued this experience with this project named "Still Active" where we enriched the participation to a project with a pre-departure preparation: as a result 29 seniors from 6 different European countries, were involved in voluntary service projects abroad. We want to underline that this guide was possible thanks to the work of all the volunteers who – as pioneers – accepted to take part to the test phase: to all of them a big thanks!

In the first two parts, we provide a general introduction to the programme as run so far together with the list of the main features common to all projects: reading these parts should help you to assess whether you might be interested in such a kind of initiative. We are aware that this proposal will not appeal to everyone, which is of course perfectly fine but we hope that this publication will give you a clear picture of the whole programme. The second part will describe 5 of the past "Still Active" projects that we quote as examples. Each project is followed by the report of the volunteers who took part in that specific initiative. This will hopefully give you an idea not only of the proposed possibilities but also of the way they were actually experienced by the volunteers. We hope you will find interesting the differences between a project on paper and its actual development.

This publication is one of the results of the project "Still Active!" supported by the Socrates programme of the European Commission and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generation and Consumer Protection.

PART 1 – Introduction to a possible European Senior Volunteer Programme

1.1 The Background

In the past years Europe saw a dramatic change of demographic trends and an important ageing of its population. People are living longer throughout Europe as a result of improved public health provision, medical progress, improved diet and housing. The expectation of a longer life caused a deep change in lifestyles and needs of seniors. The Charter of Rights of the European Union recognises these changes stating that "the European Union acknowledges and respect the right of seniors to have an independent and respectable life and to take part to social and cultural life" (art. 25). In Europe, the majority of seniors lives in better conditions than in the past but there is still a certain degree of risk of permanent social exclusion due to ageing. The creation of a European society active at all ages needs a strategy that allows seniors to take part in social life after the exit from the labour market. Specific actions at European level devoted to seniors, can develop schemes of social inclusion and active participation in order to change seniors from passive beneficiaries of social protection to active citizens in the construction of Europe.

1.2 a strategy to enhance active citizenship

The great success of the European Youth programme and more specifically of its Action 2 "European Voluntary Service" showed how international voluntary service can represent an extraordinary experience of non formal learning for young people. Thus, International voluntary service can also make an important contribution to the promotion of active citizenship among seniors thanks to its social and cultural features of participation and solidarity.



Seniors should be considered as potential volunteers in all the member countries of the European Union. In fact they have always been the backbone of traditional civic organizations, running churches and voluntary organizations, charitable fund-raising activities etc. Getting extra life from extra years implies the idea of active citizenship also after retirement. Older persons have a capacity and an appetite for being active which tends to be insufficiently recognized. Engaging in mentally stimulating activities is important for the development and preservation of capacities in later life. Such possibilities need to be greatly expanded. Preparing for longer, more active and better lives, and seizing opportunities for active contributions after retirement are important ways to secure a

maximum degree of self-reliance and self-determination in old age. Indeed, seniors are already very active in non-governmental organizations. Involving a larger number of able seniors in voluntary work could be a major tool in active ageing strategies.

1.3 Past projects – what has already been done

In 2001 two mobility pilot projects in favour of older persons were granted by the European Commission. They were both based on the principles of transnational voluntary service, active citizenship, intercultural education and cross-generation dialogue. We believe that the work of the past years should be continued and enhanced



and as a partnership we somehow feel committed in keeping on this work especially in front of the good results obtained in terms of involving people, organisations of the civil society and local governments.

One of the two projects was granted in the year 2001 in the framework of **SOCRATES – GRUNDTVIG 1**. The project named **"Mobility 55"** included, a survey on the attitude toward performing voluntary service activities by over 55 years old citizens

and a test phase where 30 older volunteers from 5 different countries performed a period of 1 to 2 months voluntary service in community based projects abroad.

During the test phase and its evaluation, we realized that these kinds of activities are highly appreciated both by the volunteers and by the hosting organizations. Volunteers felt themselves needed, useful and active and learnt from the intercultural environment. At the same time hosting organizations not only benefited from their voluntary work but in many cases, they started a true mutual learning process. But we also raised up a high interest among several local governments that saw these initiatives of exchange happen in the area they manage.

The other project was granted by the DG Employment and Social Affairs of the European Commission. This project named **"European Exchange Programme of Older Volunteers"** involved 8 European countries and managed to move 137 volunteers between 50 and 80 years old.

So we arrive to the current project that has been running since 2003, named **"Still Active!"** – again supported by the Socrates Programme – Action Grundtvig 1. This project is aimed at drafting training modules for potential older volunteers who would like to take part to projects abroad, and for community based hosting organizations of civil society interested in having volunteers from abroad involved in their activities on a short term basis.

1.4 The educational features: intercultural and intergenerational learning

Volunteering abroad, including its preparatory and follow-up stages, represents a full non-formal education experience. A wide literature has been published on voluntary service in cultural contexts, different from their native one and the intercultural impact on participants, but it almost exclusively deals with young people. We believe that also for senior citizens, such an exposure would be very useful: because they can contribute, with their life experience, to socially useful initiatives and they are recognized as fully active and still be able to perform actions in favour of others. The intercultural learning experience is a two-way one: not only the volunteer is deepened into another culture, but also the host learn from the volunteers different points of view, different ways to perform activities and directly deal with another mentality beyond all prejudices and stereotypes.

The best experiences have seen senior and young volunteers working together and sharing daily life from the work to the meals and sometimes the same accommodation. We noticed that it is impossible to state who is learning from whom but it is clear that the process of mutual enrichment is there and it works well destroying all possible prejudices and stereotypes that people have towards those of a different generation.

1.5 Where the whole thing is coming from: a bit of history

You might be curious now to know where this kind of proposal is coming from. Indeed it has quite old roots. We have to go back to the end of World War I to a small village named Verdun at the border with France and Germany. Something totally amazing and incredible happened: a group of international volunteers organized by a Swiss Conscientious Objector named Pierre Ceresole went to this village to help in the reconstruction of some destroyed houses. The group of international volunteers included also some German volunteers. Can you believe it? French and Germans were fighting each other a short time previously and now they were working together for a common goal. This was so incredible that the French authorities became suspicious, rumours were started that they probably were spies, so after 6 weeks the experience was closed. But this idea of international voluntary service that encourages solidarity and helps people from different nationalities, background and lifestyle to get closer working on a common goal was retained. This is as well the foundation year of the organization "Service Civil International", mother and root of many similar national organizations and worldwide networks.

PART 2 – Few considerations (hopefully) useful to volunteers

2.1 Projects and requested skills

Volunteers are not required to have specific skills to take part in this kind of international voluntary service activity: what is needed is a good motivation and a spirit of flexibility. Indeed this is one of the key-point of this programme: all volunteers can take part in any project if they like it. If you spent your life designing high fashion clothing but you cannot handle a hoe, you could take part in an organic agriculture project if you wish. Having ironed shirts for all of your life will not prevent you from taking part in an animation project with children and at the same time a professional boxer might like to help in opening a new pathway in the mountains. Got it?

Let's face now two typical objections to all this:

1. How can I "help" doing something if I am not skilled and have to learn everything?

Fundamental rule of international voluntary service: volunteers do not steal jobs of local working labour. What would you think if you were a social worker, operating with children and you were fired because lovely volunteers came from abroad substituting you for good?



This is unfair competition (if not incitement to xenophobia) and we are not interested in it.

Let's clarify the issue of "helping". If an organisation needs relevant work in its office, they will hire skilled technicians who will do the job. A volunteer from abroad represents more an important resource for a project in terms of intercultural learning. It is important what they can do at a practical level in the everyday activities, but their presence and "diversity" represent a value in itself. An adult volunteer has many experiences to pass on even if they are not relevant

with the actual work they perform. This is even more important when young people are involved in the project: the cross-generation exchange is one of the aims of this programme. Skills we are looking for are more related with human than manual capacities: relationship building, ability to listen to others and to share our experiences.

2. Why should I go abroad to take care, say, of children? Don't they have their volunteers at local level?

Logically speaking this question definitely makes sense. In most European countries, there are a lot of volunteers active at local level. To cut the grass in a garden or hammering a nail in a youth centre or telling a story to a disabled child, no one is waiting from us from

far away. Hopefully. We must refer again to the concept of "helping" and "being useful" as outlined above. At the beginning the presence of foreign volunteers in a project might also represent a burden from the host organisation's point of view: the main focus is then on the inter-exchange, from our perspective. If you don't believe that the meeting of different cultures is an advantage both for you and your host and that the building of a less uncivil society necessarily needs to be confronted with diversity, you will be probably not interested in this programme. If instead all this stimulated your curiosity, it might be worthwhile to continue reading more information on this programme.

2.2 When and where

In theory this kind of activity can be organised everywhere. The exchange of volunteers held during the summer 2002 involved organisations from five countries of the European Union – Spain, Austria, France, Germany and Italy. The intercultural value of the experience we were talking about, doesn't change if we are in a big town, in a small village or in the middle of the forest. We might have some preferences, maybe we already know one place and we would like to visit it not as tourist, or maybe someone recommended us some other places because people are open and friendly or reserved but welcoming and so on. We advise you to follow your desires and inclinations when choosing a destination. When we talk about intercultural experience we also want to refer to one of the most effective feature of this programme: check our prejudices. Wherever you go be careful of stereotypes and be receptive with your ears and eyes: you will be pleasantly surprised.



A period away and "home sweet home"

When we set up this programme we wanted to propose to future adult volunteers periods of voluntary service ranging from 3 to 6 months. The reality suggested to us something different: most of the volunteers had too many engagements with their families and in general did not feel comfortable to stay away for such a long period. The proposal had to be reviewed in order to meet these needs: this is why we fixed a period ranging between 2 and 8 weeks. Less than this we believe it is not worthwhile. Before leaving try not to spread too much unhappiness behind you: water your plants, leave food for your cat and explain to your families exactly what you are going to be doing and why and that you will phone or contact them frequently (and then please do it).

International voluntary service and the "Foreign Legion"

This is important: do not take this experience as a period in the "Foreign Legion". If something really bad happened to you lately or if you are trying to escape from some very difficult situation avoid to take part to a project of voluntary service abroad, it

simply won't work, as your problems will follow you wherever you go. Please consider that hosting projects normally have enough troubles without yours and if they don't you can be sure that they won't miss it. Be honest and clear with yourself about it otherwise it could lead to a bad experience.

Interrupting a project

We all make mistakes. We all can make wrong choices and at the same time we can be unlucky. Sometimes we expect something different from what we find or we realise that we were not interested in something only when we are experiencing it. This guidebook is meant to limit these problems as much as possible but it is unrealistic to predict all the situations that may happen - and maybe not so interesting. Taking for granted the good faith of the hosting organisation and the hosted volunteer, there might be a lot of different reasons why a volunteer decides to interrupt a project. Try not to view it as a failure nor to blame someone else. In the most of the cases the decision of a volunteer to leave a project early springs from an accumulated series of things that went wrong. Everytime you have a problem you should talk to your tutor or if you prefer with your sending organisation in order to find possible solutions. If you tried everything without success you might decide to leave: please agree that with your hosting and sending organisations don't just leave. It is very important to understand and discuss the motivations of this choice in order to avoid misunderstandings, not to repeat the same mistakes in the future and to help the organisations to see where they might change the way they work with volunteers.



2.3 Food and Accommodation

One of the aims of this programme is to have new experiences and this applies to food as to everything else.

In most cases - especially in situations of community life - someone else will cook for you: not everyone is a good cook nor is the right person always at the right place. You may leave from your country with your suitcase full of the food you are used to but to take on board the risk of a drastic change in your diet is also part of the experience; and it doesn't necessarily mean that you will have a so bad experience. Be prepared to experiment with different types of food and perhaps you may also like to cook for your host organisation to introduce them to the cuisine of your country.

Proper accommodation is always guaranteed. Sometimes you have to share your room with someone else. You might be guest in a family somehow involved in the organisation or (more likely) in the community that runs the project.

If you have specific requests about this, it is important to clarify it before leaving in order to arrange the best solution for you

2.4 Language

The language of your country is not spoken in most of the other countries. This simple consideration leads to the self-exclusion of many possible volunteers. To express oneself in a different language is not always easy. If we have never done it, we might feel like the actors of "mission impossible". If you have a basic knowledge of English or the language spoken in your hosting country, that's an advantage. During the pre-departure phase, it can be a good idea to attend that language course you have always put off or to phone the nice couple of foreigners you met at the beach last summer. It is fair to add that if you fluently speak five languages but you are not interested in communicating with other people there is a serious problem just the same.

As stated above, the idea of this programme is to give the chance to all to have an experience of voluntary service abroad: at the same time we don't think it is a good idea to venture with no knowledge of the hosting country language or at least of the English language that many people can more or less manage. If you don't speak any foreign language at all and you don't want to - or cannot - learn one, we invite you to consider performing a period of voluntary service in your country (maybe in a different town from where you live) as a starter and then if you like the idea prepare linguistically yourself for the next year abroad.



2.5 The trip

The trip represents an important part of the experience. You might travel alone or with other persons joining the same project. You will get detailed instructions to arrive to the place where the project is held with all the relevant phone numbers in case of emergency and you will be expected to reach the final destination of the project on your own. The best way to avoid problems while travelling is staying at home. Nothing can guarantee that going from A to B will happen smoothly and without problems: in a way it is the core of travelling. What we can do is giving advise of the most common inconveniences. We selected two of them among the others:

1. Missing your connection

Never had the thrilling experience of missing a connection? We don't think so and it is likely to happen to you again. In this case, first don't panic and then try to contact one of the emergency numbers especially those of the hosting project to tell them that you will be probably late. It will help especially if someone is waiting for you at the airport or at the train station: they will not get worried first and angry later. A furious host cannot guarantee a nice beginning...

2. Missing your baggage

According to the statistics at least the 5 percent of the baggage embarked on a plane follows a different destination from its owner. It may happen. This advice might seem superfluous but it wants to be a reminder: bring a change of clothes in your hand baggage, urgent medicines and whatever else you might need during the first two days. But most of all: don't panic!

All the airports are equipped with a specific department able to give you the necessary assistance normally in some language that you can understand. Be as co-operative as you can and your luggage will reach you within 48 hours.



Someone probably will come to pick you up at the airport or at the train station. It may happen as well that nobody can come: don't take it as a personal discourtesy, try instead to understand how the local transport system works. Try to gather the relevant information before your departure: in many cases you can find relevant information on the internet.

2.6 How can I participate?

The senior volunteers who attended the *Still Active!* programme were guided to the available hosting projects through organizations in their respective countries. *Still Active!* is not a permanent programme, it runs as a pilot project for stimulating the participation of senior volunteers to voluntary actions abroad. These voluntary actions are widely proposed by organizations almost everywhere in the world: someone who would like to join one of these proposals has only to get the right information. It's possible to find group projects, for 10-15 all-aged people normally with the schedule of a workcamp normally lasting 2 or 3 weeks, or individual placements, concerning 1 or 2 volunteers in principle for longer periods from 1 to 12 months. Any position abroad is advertised with project idea and possible tasks, location, minimum length of service, age limits, conditions, suggestions. For workcamp schedule normally there is no selection and the volunteer is just accepted if simply there is still a place available. For longer projects, some selection is operated by the hosting organization, which can ask for a curriculum vitae, information about health conditions, skills in languages or for manual, social or intellectual tasks (see below, paragraph 2.7).

In annex 2 of this booklet there is a list of organizations to whom it's possible to address requests. These umbrella organizations can provide useful addresses for national organizations in many countries.

2.7 How much will it cost?

This booklet has been produced thanks to a pilot project financed by the European

Commission. This means that for the senior volunteers who attended the project there were benefits in terms of reimbursement of their travel costs, no participation fee, insurance cover, training seminars free of charge. Outside this *Still Active!* project, the conditions for taking part in a voluntary project abroad (short workcamp or longer project) can vary a lot: certainly the participant has to cover his/her own travel cost for reaching the place. Then, normally food and accommodation is granted but neither pocket-money nor reimbursement for any extra expenditure. It can happen also that some hosting organizations can offer bus tickets or monthly bus card, or some pocket-money for the volunteer personal expenditure. Generally the sending organization asks for a participation fee for helping them in their administrative work and general mission. Sometime also the hosting organization asks for a contribution for helping them in their activities. Not always insurance is included in the participation fee.

It's important to check all the offered conditions and getting enough information about the travel costs and connections before accepting the placement and booking the travel tickets. Cancelling the participation after having been accepted is frustrating both for sending and hosting organizations.



PART 3 – 6 Examples of past projects followed by reports from volunteers

Project 1 – EURAG, Graz, Austria

COMMUNICATION DATA	Organisation: EURAG Graz (AUSTRIA) A-8010 Graz Website: www.eurag-europe.org
PROFILE AND CONTEXT OF THE WORK	EURAG is a non-profit and non-religious European organization founded in 1962 with seat in Luxembourg and is independent of political parties. Since 1974 the EURAG General Secretariat is in Graz / Austria. Through its currently 152 member organisations in 33 countries, EURAG represents millions of older people in Europe and its purpose is to promote older people's quality of life on societal, social and political levels.
EURAG PROMOTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the representation of older people's interests at European level • the exchange of experience • co-ordination, collaboration and exchange of opinions with expert and service organizations, self-help groups as well as individuals • the creation of networks
PLACEMENT AREA FOR THE SENIOR VOLUNTEER	<i>Activities of the exchanged senior volunteer.</i> Various fields of work: office work in the Secretariat of a European social NGO, work in a day-care centre for older people, involvement in the work of the Graz Seniors' Office
CONDITIONS OF PLACEMENT	<p>Framework conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Exchange of experiences with other volunteers • Guarantee of a commuter ticket for public transport <p>Accommodation: Private accommodation Dates and time schedules: Number of weeks: 4</p>
WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM THE SENIOR VOLUNTEER?	Special qualifications of the volunteer: Teamwork, flexibility Level of mastering the local language to carry out the tasks involved: Sufficiently for the internal use.

"REPORT" Project: Graz, EURAG 6 – 30 July 2004

Franca, Italian Volunteer

During last summer I had the chance to take part to the European Project named "Still Active".

My knowledge of German language, my past working experience and the long period in which I lived in Germany when I was young, surely helped me entering into the working context. As well, it was easy to communicate with my colleagues - with whom I also spent my spare time with enjoyable cultural and musical activities - and with people I lived with, a young intellectual family from Cuba that enriched me humanly and culturally.

In Graz Eurag - European Federation of Older Persons - received me: this was a great experience, instructive for both sides. Their welcome when I arrived was warm and reassuring, they were waiting for me at the main station and we went to the accommodation reserved for me, a very comfortable flat below the most important part of the city, the Schlossberg, symbol of Graz. My initial impressions were very positive, thanks to this homely atmosphere in the greenery of the hills and the breathtaking view on the city.

The office of the association, where I found kind and helpful persons, made me relive my previous employment - in reality not so challenging - that ended with my retirement.

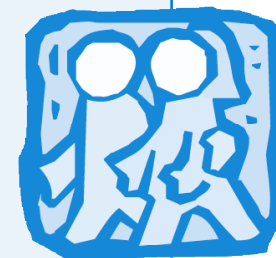
In the beginning I tidied up the books in the library, I hope my work was completed to their satisfaction.

Then, my second activity - translation from German to Italian of some interesting information of the association - took me back of several years to the issues I was concerned with in the past.

Also my participation in the Italian course, gave me the opportunity to meet interesting people such as some ladies-students, really open to the dialogue, with whom a climate of reciprocal friendliness has been created.

For sure having knowledge of the hosting country language is helpful, but I think that is not so important, the communication has to be lived at every level, especially the human ones. The mutual understanding among different people with different cultures, ages and ways of life, may come from this deep not linguistic communication, can avoid misunderstanding between people and in general among cultures and people.

This report come from a really good experience lived in another country of the European union, where I didn't feel a foreigner.



Project 2 – Youth Action for Peace, Bedheim, Germany

COMMUNICATION DATA	Organisation: Youth Action for Peace Germany – cfd e.V.
PROFILE AND CONTEXT OF THE WORK	YAP Germany – cfd is organising international voluntary service programmes, workcamps, national and international seminars and training courses in order to raise awareness in the population to be active against any form of violence, racism and prejudice and to strengthen active citizenship, defining voluntary service as a tool for mutual understanding and tolerance among all nations, cultures and generations.
PLACEMENT AREA FOR THE SENIOR VOLUNTEER	<p>Designation of the area of placement: The castle "Bedheim" is located 8 km from Hildburghausen and 15 km from Bad Rodach in the beautiful Franconian south of Thuringia near the border to Bavaria in the middle of Germany. The next main town is Coburg 28 km away from Bedheim. The castle is surrounded by a serene landscape. The estate which dilapidated in the days of the German Democratic Republic has recently been done up by the family Ruehle to whom it belongs through a supportive association which is recognised as being of benefit to the public supports the work.</p> <p>Since 1992 international work camps are organised in Bedheim together with YAP-cfd and since 1994 there is an ecological and social-therapeutic horticulture where handicapped persons are working and students of special pedagogic are doing their practical training.</p> <p>Activities of the exchanged senior volunteer: The tasks of the volunteers are multiple.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gardening work: depending on the season, volunteers will help with digging up the soil, harvesting, etc. • Renovation work at the castle and the hostel • Domestic work: helping to take care of the groups of children and youth, who are joining the castle (to help in the kitchen, cleaning, shopping, in the preparation and organisation of leisure time activities and seminars, etc.) • Assisting the leaders of the two international workcamps that takes place in the castle this summer and autumn
CONDITIONS OF PLACEMENT	<p>Framework conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork

- Exchange of experiences with other volunteers
- We can cope with requests people might forward with (realistic ones of course!)

Accommodation:

The volunteers will share a room in the castle. They should bring their sleeping bags, slippers and pullovers. The volunteers can prepare their own meals together, or eat with the staff and the guest groups

Dates and time schedules:

Number of weeks: 4

Special qualifications of the volunteer: Open-mindedness and willingness to live in a rural area.

Level of mastering the local language to carry out the tasks involved:

The volunteer has to speak German sufficiently for internal use.

WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM THE SENIOR VOLUNTEER?

"REPORT" Project: Bedheim, YAP 6 – 25 September 2004

Clementina, Italian volunteer

Report Project from a married couple who stayed in Bedheim

On the 5th September when we put our luggage into the car my heart was full of anxiety and doubts because of this experience I was going to live in Germany with my husband.

I wasn't worried for my four children that would have been alone because I knew they would have been good and wouldn't have had problems without us. I had a question in my mind: how I will be able to communicate with the other volunteers and the inhabitants of the village without knowing a word of a foreign language. The outward trip was quite good, my husband was a bit nervous for the long travel and I saw the tiredness growing on his face.

Arrived in Bedheim, the coordinator wasn't waiting for us because our arrival hadn't been communicated. Anyway she brought us to a little house where two other volunteers already lived: a woman from Vienna, very smart and communicative, and a woman from Manchester, typically English.

The little house wasn't very comfortable, in fact it was extremely basic, with holes in the walls and a mouse that visited us once making me really afraid.

I expected to meet other senior volunteers, and I was lucky because the other two volunteers spoke Italian.

After two days the Austrian volunteer left the castle and only the British woman remained with us for a week. She helped me translating what I said to the German people and I discover a real English humour in her.

After five or six days I thought to leave Bedheim because I felt useless, even if my work was the kitchen work.

The British volunteer encouraged me to stay because the next week would have arrived the young volunteers and everything would have changed.

I don't want to say that the inhabitants of the castle weren't good, but I felt a "cold" atmosphere around me and I often asked to me: what am I doing here?

On the contrary my husband was enthusiastic and with his knowledge of German he was a great talker. The work I was expected to do was a solitary work and I didn't feel to volunteering at all; in spite of this sensation I tried to do the best I could. When young volunteers from different nationalities arrived the atmosphere changed.

I made friends with them and the fact that I was the only older woman make me feel like a mother. They were really good boys and girls who worked in different fields. The majority of them worked in the garden while every day a different couple of them worked in the kitchen to prepare a meal from their country of origin.

It was really interesting to eat their typical meals and share with them the lunchtime.

I liked to know more deeply their ideas, their habits, their own culture and share with them the joy of youth.

Luckily two girls knew Italian and I could speak with them with more intensity.

My evaluation of this experience is doubtful even now, because I don't know if I reach the expected aim. Because of this sensation I keep on asking to me:

What did I go to Bedheim for?

Have I done something useful?

According with my personal aim I would have wanted to communicate more with the disabled guys who went to spend the morning at the castle three times a week; but we weren't allowed to have a real affective relationship with them.

Perhaps I would have liked to have a more tight relationship with the coordinator, who, at the beginning, seemed authoritarian, but later I discovered she was nice and friendly.

Because of all these things, at the time of my departure my eyes were full of tears. When you live negative circumstances during an experience, these negative circumstances are sometimes pushed to the background and the good sensations and memories come out.

Eugenio, Italian volunteer married to Clementina

I haven't had preconceived ideas or prejudices before going to Bedheim, because I was really prepared to this experience, although it was my first experience of this type and I didn't know anything of what I was expected to do. I can say with all my



heart that I found the atmosphere I wished to find.

In the first days the cohabitation with other people of our age was a little boring, even if there was a very interesting exchange of ideas. With the arrival of boys and girls from all nationalities, I felt like if a spring wind was whispering.

We worked together and shared every moment of the day.

We ate together and the work in the kitchen was done by a person of different nationality every day, so I had the opportunity to know the Korean kitchen, the Mexican and the Turkish one as well.

It was very interesting that all the young boys and girls explained their cultural habits using their food culture.

We had a lot of free time, so I had the time to visit different sites of Germany.

On Saturdays we were expected to go selling biological fruits and vegetables grown in the fields of the castle at the market of Coburg.

Twice a week some disabled boys came to the castle and it was exciting to see the interest they had in doing their work and the attention they paid in doing it.

Even if there was a big gap of age I didn't find an enormous distance between different generations. I was one of them and when there was a problem it became a problem of everyone.

I had the proof of that when I had a problem with my car and everyone came to help me.

I can say it was a really positive experience, from the point of view of human feelings as in the practical experience. If I had the chance to live this experience again I'd do it even tomorrow.

Project 3 – Tiszta Forrás Alapítvány, Budapest, Hungary

COMMUNICATION DATA	Organisation: Tiszta Forrás Alapítvány, Shelter for homeless people Tiszta Forrás, Budapest
PROFILE AND CONTEXT OF THE WORK	Mainly men, who are in the working age, live in this shelter because of serious problems or personal tragedies with the result of having lost their apartments, work and sometimes also the families. The house has two different areas: one room is for homeless people, who come during the day and receive food, take a shower and wash their clothes. A second area is the residential place where only men live and cook for themselves. These men are officially registered and regularly going to work. The shelter organises once a week a bible lecture and meetings for people addicted to alcohol.

PLACEMENT AREA FOR THE SENIOR VOLUNTEER	Activities of the exchanged senior volunteer: A volunteer may help in the daily housework, can help in the office work or in the kitchen. Depending on language skills, it will be of great help to communicate with the homeless and to share time with them listening to their problems.
CONDITIONS OF PLACEMENT	Framework conditions: • Teamwork : Accommodation: The volunteer will have a single room in Budapest, but not in the shelter. Lot of local travel in Budapest. The accommodation is not in the centre of Budapest, but in the district of Köbánya. Dates and time schedules: Number of weeks: 2 - 4 weeks
WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM THE SENIOR VOLUNTEER?	Special qualifications of the volunteer: No qualification is necessary, but openness and capacity to be confronted with serious problems. Level of mastering the local language to carry out the tasks involved: The organisation works since 2002 with foreign volunteers from Germany and EU aged 18-25 years . Possibility to express in Hungarian language is desirable. (minimum level: 1). Foreign languages spoken in the working context of the organisation: None. Further personal prerequisites of significance for carrying out the voluntary tasks: None.
MISCELLANEOUS	Each Wednesday a common prayer is organised in the shelter.

"REPORT" Project: BUDAPEST TISZTA FORRAS ALAPITVANY 13 - 27 September 2004

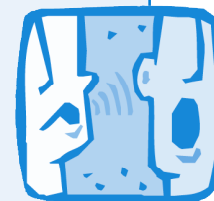
Antonio, Italian volunteer

I think that we should divide practical from human and social aspects.

PRACTICAL ASPECT

I already had some experience in Rome before this one. I did voluntary work in a community house for abandoned children, and in a canteen for poor people. I don't know Hungarian and my English is quite basic. This was my starting point. On my arrival I felt immediately in tune with the employees of the association. Only one

among the employees spoke a bit of English, and she was essential for the success of my stay there . The other employees spoke only Hungarian , they do secretary work and various sewing work and provision. My task was to co-operate with the responsible of provision (food retailing sector) to the distribution of food and other basic items. I think that it was an appropriate work considering my background. It was also the best place to have contact with homeless reality. Co-operation has been constructive and friendly since the first time in spite of language difficulties; we performed sign language most of the time: kindness, spontaneity and care made the rest . I was well housed: I stayed in a guesthouse with English breakfast near the centre of Budapest (an interesting and very beautiful city). In the activities day I had lunch with the volunteers of the association. I felt like at home because I had the possibility to have all that I want during the day and people that I met there treated me in a friendly way. I felt fully satisfied .



SOCIAL AND HUMAN ASPECTS

First of all I'm very happy to have done this experience: I refer to my will to have an experience like that, in particular in a homeless structure in Hungary where there are 3 millions of people that have a income below the poverty line. We could see it every day. Even if I stayed there for a short time I think that this experience was beneficial for spirit and mind, higher than predicted. I have tried to live this experience in the best way since the first moment. For example one day I have attended Mass (ecumenical rite) for homeless; during the ceremony, a woman has burst out crying as she has been told us her experience, this memory will be stamped in my mind for ever as well as the silence and the expressions of the other people attending the mass. Do voluntary work in your own country is natural but go and help poorer in other countries is something that everyone should do. I believe, it is necessary to be determined, resolute, conscious of what somebody wants to give. Our aid is infinitely little but it could be a stimulus and as Madre Teresa di Calcutta said it is one drop more in the sea of dreams. And someone else after 11 Sept 2001 said: future is in co-operation between people. Personally I made this mine and I wish everybody to do the same. I hope to repeat this voluntary experience.


ADVICE, SUGGESTION

I consider that this experience should be lived on an individual basis to stimulate integration spirit.

Two weeks is a too short time if someone hasn't an open mind.

English is essential, but it's also necessary to be interested, motivated, friendly and curious.

Project 4 – The Monastery of St Francis and Gorton Trust, Manchester, United Kingdom

COMMUNICATION DATA	<p>Organisation: The Monastery of St Francis and Gorton Trust Gorton – Manchester (U.K.)</p> <p>Website: www.gortonmonastery.org.uk</p>
PROFILE AND CONTEXT OF THE WORK	<p>The Church of St Francis is one of the finest examples of English Victorian Gothic architecture. It has been twice on 'The world's most endangered monuments' list. The church and the friary have fallen into disrepair and became a target of vandals and break-ins.</p> <p>Gorton in East Manchester figures high in all statistics of multiple deprivations. The area is affected by high unemployment, lack of social cohesion, vandalism, low education attainment amongst young people and the worst health statistics in the Greater Manchester area. A large number of asylum seekers and refugees live in the area as well who have no ties to the local community, don't speak the language and find local culture alien, compounding the already existing difficulties.</p> <p>A community project sprung up around this iconic building and in 7 years managed to raise almost £ 7million. The project is run by the community, through a charity, The Monastery of St. Francis & Gorton Trust. The Monastery Trust has developed a wide range of partnerships over the past seven years to help them use the restoration of the Monastery as the catalyst for the regeneration of the area and local people's lives.</p> 
PLACEMENT AREA FOR THE SENIOR VOLUNTEER	<p>Designation of the area of placement: Monastery Trust offices</p> <p>Activities of the exchanged senior volunteer: The Trust has been engaged over the past 7 years in raising funds for the renovation and activities, creating education and artistic opportunities for the local population, networking with relevant organisations and disseminating information about the Trust and its activities.</p>

	<p>Activities envisaged by the senior volunteer would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work shadowing a member of staff - Liasing/visiting other organisations and community groups in the area - Helping in the preparations for Gorton Festival - Taking part in the day to day activities of the Trust
CONDITIONS OF PLACEMENT	<p>Framework conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Exchange of experiences with other volunteers • Guarantee of a commuter ticket for public transport <p>Accommodation: Accommodation will be provided in flats on the University of Salford campus. The University of Salford is situated on a riverside site, within a mile and a half of the heart of Manchester City Centre. Busses and trains run to Gorton every few minutes. Greater Manchester is home to Europe's largest student population drawing students from across the world. In recent years there have been many exciting developments in Salford such as the new shopping, leisure and entertainment facilities.</p> <p>Dates and time schedules: Number of weeks: 2 - 3</p>
WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM THE SENIOR VOLUNTEER?	<p>Special qualifications of the volunteer: Apart from an interest in community regeneration and a willingness to be involved no special qualifications are needed.</p> <p>Level of mastering the local language to carry out the tasks involved: <i>Well to very well</i></p> <p>Foreign languages spoken in the working context of the organisation: Only English</p> <p>Further personal prerequisites of significance for carrying out the voluntary tasks: Our present offices do not have a wheelchair access</p>

"REPORT" Project: MANCHESTER MONASTERY OF St FRANCIS
31 August - 21 September 2004

Vera, Austrian volunteer

After a pleasant flight from Vienna to Manchester I was cordially received at the airport. Then we went to Salford Crescent by train and I could move into my "flat" where I should live for the next three weeks. From the window I had a wonderful view to three trees and an ample meadow.

The next morning we took a taxi to the office of Gorton Trust in East Manchester, where my place of work was. I was already very curious to get to know the people working at the office. I was cordially received by them and they showed me the wonderful and impressing church, the monastery and the monastery garden. It is incredible that the monastery is in such a bad state at the moment. The Gorton Trust aims at doing something against that bad state: they get involved in order to renovate the whole complex and to create a new centre for the community of Gorton. The community of Gorton organises various activities regularly, for example a choir (where I had the possibility to participate, too) and beginning of October a big festival takes place, with a procession with lanterns for the children.



My task was to help at the preparation for the procession with lanterns, another volunteer from Poland who arrived one week after me. From the beginning, I got along with her and the collaboration gave us great pleasure.

First of all, we had to decide in which way the lanterns should look like: we had two different kind of lanterns. The children who should participate in the procession were aged from 5-8, and

they were allowed to choose which lantern they would carry during the procession. The children could fabricate their personal lantern: we had organised workshops (2 hours) in the primary schools and in some youth groups. Myself, the Polish volunteer and some other people from the Gorton Trust could assist the teachers and children to fabricate the lanterns. I called the directors of the primary schools and the leaders of the youth groups to co-ordinate the dates for all the workshops.

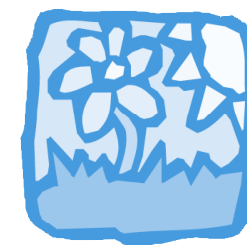
After we had done all the preparation work, we could finally assist in the workshops. For me, it was a completely new experience and a great pleasure to work with little children and help them to do handicrafts. I was really very, very happy at this work. I still remember their voices when they needed some help... "Miss, Miss, Miss, please..." These hours spent with the children were unforgettable hours for me. As a result of our workshops, about 500 lanterns will illuminate the sky at

the festival on 2nd October, and I will remember all the children of Gorton... On September 18th and 19th the "Heritage-open-weekend" in Gorton took place. The inhabitants had the possibility to visit the church and get some information about the planned renovations. It was a very impressive experience to see so many people in the church, and it also proved the importance of this church for the community.

For me those three weeks in Manchester stand for a lot of positive experiences: I got to know new friends in England, I found a new friend from Poland, I could speak English for three weeks (which I enjoyed very much), I was impressed by the positive atmosphere in the primary schools and I enjoyed my work with the children. Thank you very much again for having made all this possible!

Project 5 – Legambiente, Eboli, Italy

COMMUNICATION DATA	Organisation: Legambiente onlus Address: Via Salaria 403 00199 Roma - Italia
PROFILE AND CONTEXT OF THE WORK	<p>LEGAMBIENTE (<i>League for the environment</i>) is the most widespread environmental association in Italy. It is formed by 1.500 local clubs, 20 regional committees, over 115.000 among members and supporters.</p> <p>It carries out information and awareness campaigns and organises actions of environmental voluntary work involving thousands of people. Legambiente promotes solidarity and co-operation for development and it is active in emergency and first aid activities.</p> <p>Legambiente promotes long-term voluntary service in Italy and abroad. In Italy there are several permanent voluntary centres hosting all the yearlong all-aged volunteers.</p> <p>Legambiente gave its contribution to the project since its conception a few years ago. We do believe that voluntary action is one of the best educational and peace tool, both for all-aged people involved and for the hosting community.</p>
PLACEMENT AREA FOR THE SENIOR VOLUNTEER	<p>Designation of the area of placement: <i>Environment and social issues</i> Eboli, area of Salerno, Southern Italy</p>





Terminal: closest international airport is Naples (100 km). Train station in Eboli, with connections with Naples and Rome.

Activities of the exchanged senior volunteer:

The small city of Eboli is located few kilometres from Paestum and the National Park Cilento e Vallo di Diano, close to interesting and very attractive tourist sites as Pompei and the Costiera Amalfitana. The projects hosts long term young volunteers and short-term all-aged volunteers, both from Italy and from other countries. Volunteers will be involved in two different activities: cleaning and protecting an area along the coast (which in the past was disfigured by illegal buildings), and the improvement of different urban vegetable plot managed by elderly people and city gardens in the town. Work can be manual or promotional, so that each volunteer can give his/her best contribution.

CONDITIONS OF PLACEMENT

Framework conditions:

- Teamwork
- Exchange of experiences with other volunteers

Accommodation:

Volunteers will be hosted in the "villa Falcone-Borsellino", a nice building on the coast. They will share common rooms (4-8 beds) and facilities. Meals will be prepared by the volunteers themselves at turn.

Dates and time schedules:

Number of weeks: 4, 12th July – 13th August

WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM THE SENIOR VOLUNTEER?

Special qualifications of the volunteer: None.

Level of mastering the local language to carry out the tasks involved:

It's enough a good interest in learning some words.

MISCELLANEOUS

The project can host 2 "Still active" volunteers. They will attend two sections of the same project. The first will be an international camp (15 people), from 12th to 26th July. The second will be a camp with only Italian volunteers, from 2nd to 13th August. Some days off could be taken in between the 2 periods, but of course the volunteers can also just rest as they like because the accommodation will be always available. During the whole period 3 young European volunteers will support the senior volunteers, as well as the friendly local Legambiente people.

"REPORT" Project: EBOLI LEGAMBIENTE 9 July – 13 August 2004

Franz, Austrian volunteer

Host organization: *The 'inner circle' of LEGAMBIENTE Group in Eboli, is a very dedicated team of people who are thinking and acting alternatively.*

From the beginning they have been very much treating myself with attention and respect. Also my efforts to integrate me into the group was appreciated.

Activity:

Although my Italian knowledge was very limited, from the very beginning I have been included in the line of information. Altogether, I fully took part in the group activities. The long time volunteers conducted the two groups. My position could be referenced as a co-leader.



The basic organization was laid out in two shifts in that carried out their daily work. The beach section was about 5 km away from our accommodation. This way was covered with bicycles. The morning shift started about 08.00 am, the afternoon shift started at about 2pm.

The first week was exclusively dedicated to the collection of waste at the coast and in the quite big area of woodland. In the second week we worked in small groups, which on one hand continued with the collection of waste, on the other hand worked on posts for the delimitation between the pure sand beach and the to be saved dune stripe. Tables and benches have been built during the last week. Last but not least we started with the planning of children playgrounds and establishing of fireplaces and barbecue spots.

Accommodation: *Architecturally attractive, the house is often described as a mafia villa and is indeed a very solid construction. Heavy panelled doors, full marble bathroom and alike. Still, for our accommodation, the building had been cleared out completely and equipped with camping-beds. Too narrow for the first group, which was a little smaller, the house has been clearly too small and too narrow for the second, the Italian camp, which has been considerably larger. The kitchen was very poor and very provisionally built in the former garage. I have been astonished that the quality of the meals have been so excellent – one masterpiece of southern Italian improvising talent.*

Altogether and despite the marble bath (without mirror though) – the accommodation was very basic and needed some time to get used to. The lack of any privacy is nevertheless- also for me as a Central European (also as a former soldier and

certainly not being spoilt in this regard)- very difficult to bear with. Personally this was the greatest challenge of my stay.

Catering: As just mentioned the food was good quality and mostly more than sufficient. However, this activity has also provided the possibility of being very creative. As an example together with the long-time Turkish volunteer we have organised a Turkish-Austrian catering day. According to the applause, this was quite a successful meal.

Language, country and people, excursions: in regards to my limited knowledge of the Italian language I earlier read in my application: 'It is sufficient to show a good interest and the readiness to learn some words! This is sufficient for the daily work and for the interaction within the group itself, however to understand the connections between various things, this is too less. It was my luck that there was someone born in Switzerland who has lived in Eboli/Battipaglia for 40 years. Only her explanations and interpretations – not seldomly enriched by her own decades of experience – allowed a qualified access to the often incomprehensible behaviours, caused by the differences in the mentality and ways of thinking.

The support for leisure time and excursions by the Eboli team was considerable high. Many evenings have been done solemnly. The pizza oven has often been used. The looser LEGAMBIENTE members and many friends also came to these occasions. There have always been many people around, something was going on at any point in time, so to speak. The campfires on the beach added their part to the whole situation.

Résumé: In the context of my former military career and by numerous contacts with other armies I have been able to collect certain experiences with other people and mentalities. However, at the end those were marked by approximately similar conditions (the armies of all countries kind of work the same way). Therefore this way of life and work within this project has been a complete new experience full of impressions for me. So has been getting acquainted with people in their environment and all of their peculiarities and habits.

My high respect goes to the leadership team of the LEGAMBIENTE group of SILARIS in Eboli. The weeks in the bay of Salerno were an experience easily to be remembered and- under no circumstances I would like to miss it.

ANNEX 1 A proposal of Code of Conduct for international senior volunteers

We expect all volunteers to behave in a sensible and professional manner but thought it would be helpful to offer you some guidance as to how you can get the most from your experience. These should also help to avoid misunderstandings or communication problems. These are your obligations but your host organisation and your sending organisation also have obligations to you.



✓ Attendance at any preparatory meetings at home or at your host organisation is a condition of your acceptance on this project

- ✓ At all times you must act in accordance with the rules of your hosting organisation.
- ✓ Be responsible at all times and complete the tasks that are given to you.
- ✓ It is important that you communicate with your host and involve yourself in as many activities as possible! This will help you to make more friends and learn about the local traditions and habits
- ✓ Be considerate of local culture and work practices. Show consideration and respect to your fellow staff and any individuals you may be working with on placement
- ✓ Follow any advice given to you by your hosting organisation or by the organising group. If you fail to do so, you may put yourself and others in danger.
- ✓ You must fulfil your commitment to the placement while looking after your health and well-being. Deal with any medical complaints promptly. Your host organisation will have details of all local health providers. You must inform the sending organisation of any health conditions that might prevent you from carrying out your voluntary work to a high standard.
- ✓ If you wish to take time to see the local area please arrange this well in advance with your host organisation
- ✓ Maintain your accommodation to an appropriate standard
- ✓ If you are concerned that you are being asked to do too much or too little work please discuss this with your host. If the situation is not resolved satisfactorily please contact your sending organisation.
- ✓ Enjoy yourself!



So having described what we would expect from you – what can you expect from your sending organisations?

- ✓ They should recruit and train the volunteers
- ✓ Should place the volunteers according to their skills and interests in the most suit-

- able project
- ✓ Should provide as much information as possible to volunteers
- ✓ Should introduce past volunteers to new volunteers and ask them to help with new volunteers with same project
- ✓ Should evaluate the project
- ✓ Should take care of the volunteer during and after the project, maintaining contact with the hosting organization while a volunteer is in the project.
- ✓ Should provide Visa support (if needed)
- ✓ Should provide emergency contact persons for family of volunteers

And what can you expect from the hosting organisation?

- ✓ They should send confirmation of the volunteers place with them to the volunteer and to the hosting organisation
 - ✓ Should send sufficient information to the sending organization and volunteer
 - ✓ Should arrange a work schedule so the volunteer knows what is expected from them
 - ✓ Should organise all practicalities such as meals and accommodation
- Ideally they should collect the volunteer from the train station or airport
- ✓ Should provide a welcome session for the volunteer: introduce the volunteer to the project and to all the members, volunteers and staff of the hosting organization
 - ✓ Should give a brief guide to the local culture, custom, law, tradition, belief and norms to the volunteers
 - ✓ Should provide a tutor or a contact person for the volunteer
 - ✓ Should provide transportation during the project
 - ✓ Should organise social activities (optional) or have information about the possibilities in the area
 - ✓ Should facilitate the communication flow between the foreign senior volunteers and the local volunteers
 - ✓ Should be aware of local health provisions and the procedure for visitors needing to use the local health system – how can they register with a doctor or do they need to pay?
 - ✓ Should compile an evaluation report to send to the volunteer and to the sending organisation



ANNEX 2 International Voluntary Service Organisations with Mid-term placements possibilities for older volunteers

Retired & Seniors Volunteer Programme Community Service Volunteers (CSV)

237 Pentonville Road
UK - London N19 NJ
Tel: +44 - 20 - 764 31 397
Fax: +44 - 20- 783 30 149
E-mail: Gdratray@aol.com
Contact: Gordon Ratray
Web: <http://www.csv.org>

RSVP have a programme for older volunteers in the UK & want to exchange volunteers with other organisations in Europe.

Eirene

Engerser Straße 74b, D - 56564
Neuwied
Tel: +49 - 2631 - 83 79 0
Fax: +49 - 2631 - 3 11 60
e-mail: sigpetry@gmx.de
Contact: Sigmar Petry
Web: www.eirene.org/

A German organisation that has a volunteer exchange programme in Europe & with developing countries. They welcome older volunteers. Most of their placements are a year or more.

Ecumenical Diaconal Year Network (EDYN)

c/o Jeugdwerk PKN
P.O. Box 8504 NL - 3503 Utrecht

Tel: +49 - 7274 777 485
Web: www.edyn.org

A European network of ecumenical organisations working with national and international volunteers. They welcome older people.

Service Civil International (SCI)

St. Jacobsmarkt 82, B - 2000
Antwerpen
Tel: +32 -3 - 22 65 727
Fax: +32 -3 - 23 20 344
email: sciint@sciint.org
Contact: Isabelle Vandenberg
Web: www.ines.org/sci/

A world-wide peace movement, which involves many volunteers, national and international. There is no age limit, and placements vary from 2 weeks to 2 years.

Youth Action for Peace/Action Jeunesse pour la Paix (YAP/AJP)

Avenue du Parc Royal 3, B - 1020
Bruxelles
Tel: +32 - 2 - 478 94 10
Fax: +32 - 2 - 478 94 32
e-mail: yapis@xs4all.be
Contact: Gisèle Evrard
Web: www.yap.org/

Also a global network, which from its name, would appear to be exclusively for the young, but they can host senior people too – particularly in their many workcamps of 2-3 weeks.

Eurag – European Federation for Older Persons

Weilandgasse, 9

A-8010 Graz

Austria

Tel: +43-(0)316-814608

Fax: +43-(0)316-814608

e-mail: office@eurag-europe.org

Web: www.eurag-europe.org

Contact: Gerhard Teissl

Eurag is an International umbrella of organisations working for older people. They have been involved in senior volunteers exchange for several years and they can give information on the issue.

Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations

c/o MS, Bogergade 14, DK-1300

Copenhagen., Denmark

Tel: 0045 7731 0000

Fax: 0045 7731 0060

e-mail: alliance@alliance-network.org

Web: www.alliance-network.org

The Alliance is a network of mainly workcamp organisations. Most members welcome senior volunteers on their extensive annual programme of international workcamps.

Co-ordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS)

UNESCO, 1 rue Miollis, F - 75015 Paris

Tel: +33 - 1 - 45 68 49 36

Fax: +33 - 1 - 42 73 05 21

e-mail: ccivs@unesco.org

Contact: Simona Costanzo

Web: www.unesco.org/ccivs

A global network of workcamp organisations. Its probably best not to go to them directly but contact their member organisations to find out more.

Association of Voluntary Service Organisations

174 Rue Joseph II, 1000 Brussels -

Belgium

Tel.: +32-2-230 68 13

Fax: +32-2-231 14 13

E-mail: info@avso.org

Website: www.avso.org

A European umbrella for long-term voluntary service organisations. Best not to contact them directly, but to get in touch with their members for more info.

This booklet is one of the results of the European project named "Still Active". The activities were co-ordinated by the Italian organization Lunaria and carried out by a partnership composed by three international networks, AVSO - the Association of Voluntary Service Organisations, The Alliance of the European Voluntary Service Organisations and EURAG - the European Federation of Older persons. Other partners included the University of Salford (UK), an Italian environmental organization (Legambiente), a Research Institute of Frankfurt (ISIS) and the Municipality of Roma. The idea was to outline some tools for senior volunteers and potential hosting organizations in order to favour their experience of volunteering abroad.

Thanks to different European projects all focusing on international senior volunteers exchanges, more than 300 volunteers and many organizations have been experiencing this kind of adventure since the year 2001. In the summer of 2002 Still Active involved 40 volunteers from 50 to 70 years old who were hosted in more than 20 projects in Austria, Estonia, Germany, the U.K, Italy, Hungary, Poland. This booklet is devoted to senior citizens who are curious about volunteering abroad in a social project. The booklet includes some general information, examples of past projects and the reports of the volunteers who were involved in those initiatives. Other materials include a training course for senior volunteers and a special booklet dedicated to those organisations who would like to host senior volunteers in their projects. "Still Active" was supported by the Socrates program of the European Commission and co-funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generation and Consumer protection.

Davide di Pietro

STILL ACTIVE!

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE PROPOSALS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

handbook for volunteers



COMMISSIONE EUROPEA
PROGRAMMA SOCRATES



TÖSTERREICHISCHES BUNDESMINISTERIUM
FÜR SOZIALE SICHERHEIT, GENERATIONEN
UND KONSUMENTENSCHUTZ



COMUNE DI ROMA



LEGAMBIENTE



EURAG



University of Salford
A Greater Manchester University

European Commission
Socrates Programme

Lunaria