



Solidarity Tracks  
Cultural NGO for Youth  
[www.tamonopatia.org](http://www.tamonopatia.org)

ΜΟΝΟΠΑΤΙΑ ΑΛΛΗΛΕΓΓΥΗΣ

# Volunteering helps your Community



**Euromed Training course**

**Lefkas, 23/09 to 02/10 2011**



Education and Culture



The European Year of Volunteering 2011



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# SUMMARY



Our training course »Volunteering life helps your community« took place in a beautiful Lefkada where we were staying for 8 working days. Participating countries were: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey.

In these days we learned about volunteering, about cultures in other countries, their organizations, we gained new knowledge on volunteering projects, found out about possibilities for volunteering life and for sure we developed the idea of importance of volunteering life for our own community. We shared our cultures and we were trying to build cooperation between all of us. Now, we all have some new contacts of the organizations and it is a great start for our future projects. Also we prepared an exhibition about our own organizations and projects.

It is important to see how volunteering works in reality and that is the reason why we visited

the Elderly center to see how volunteers are working there. On the other hand, we had a lot of presentations made by volunteers in Solidarity tracks which showed us projects on which they are working.

Also, a lot of presentations were made – about Youth in action program, Policy of voluntary work, Euromed practical guide, BE IN campaign etc. We learned how to write an application form for an EVS and a lot of other technical details. We had debates about the needs and the profile of a volunteer.

For an ending we were talking about our future projects with a purpose to realise them.

Also, we were honoured to have an international evening with a typical international food from each country, some greek lessons and one free day to explore islands around Lefkada. We spent a great and full of knowledge time. Thanks to Solidarity tracks, to the trainers and to volunteers Katja, Silvia and Attila for making a great work.



# The voice of participants



**Sarma Brauna, Latvia.** Hi! I am the chairperson of the NGO Jau-natne par iesaistisanos from Latvia, which is a youth NGO working in the fields of non formal education, youth information, life-long learning, art and culture.

My NGO unites persons who are young with fewer opportunities. Out of 8 employees in our office, 6 are handicaped.

Therefore, we are able to form a “bridge” between socially marginalized youth and local authorities. We know from our own experience how to reach young people with less opportunities and how to talk to them.

In order to widen their horizons of young people with fewer opportunities, we are working with “Youth in action” program European Voluntary Service sending and hosting projects. Until now, have sent and hosted in Latvia around 100 volunteers.

When I received the invitation to this seminar I wanted to go right away, because I knew that my Greek partner from NGO Solidarity Tracks in Lefkas is doing very important work for the local community and I wanted to see it myself.

Also, I wanted to compare our towns and the needs of the com-

munities, because in many ways we are similar.

I was excited about meeting other participants of the seminar, especially from the MEDA countries. I am not a professional seminar participant. Therefore, I have never met representatives from Tunisia, Palestine, Jordan, Egypt and Algeria.



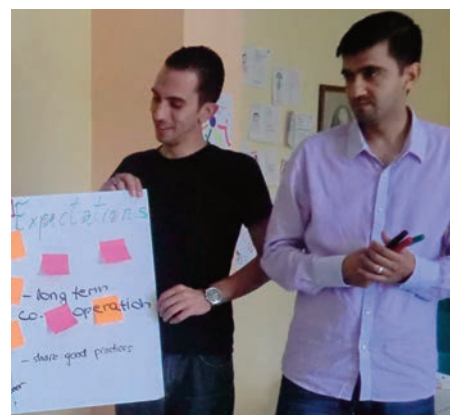
**Ala'Jaber Al-Alawnah, Jordan.** I was registered to this training course believing that every experience helps whatever area or field it covers. From this believe I joined this training that would enhance my experience in volunteering work in the Mediterranean region, through getting in contact with people from different organizations who have implemented volunteering projects, which definitely gets me informed on the obstacles encounter volunteers, hosting organization, sending and coordinating organizations in order to avoid when I get in need to participate in volunteering projects.

When I arrived to Lefkada and the program was initiated, different expectations and needs were in my mind, which started

day after day to turn into realities, I met with the people who have special volunteering experiences, I exchanged opinions with them and acquired their practices in order to consider when participating in similar activities.

“I exchanged opinions and acquired in order to consider when participating in similar activities”

This training has clarified the vision in front of my eyes on the process of being part of volunteering projects in the region and broadened the horizon of participating in a successful youth activity.



I was happy to be part of the training members, and admit that participants on a very high level of understanding and willingness to help and support their communities through enhancing volunteerism culture on different community slices.

I wish everybody in this training a success in his/her endeavors; with my hopes to keep cooperating with each one of them.

## Fruitful experience of being a volunteer in Lefkada

### Katja Lihtenvalner, Slovenia.

On 1th of March 2011 I arrived to small Island in Ionian sea called Lefkada. I was few times before in Greece already so I was a bit familiar with Greek culture and habits of people here but it was my first time to be here. I was dealing with culture shock and with adaption on new life here. I came as EVS (European Voluntary Service) volunteer with attention to conduct theatre workshops for human rights. I got a lot of information about my project already from previous Romanian volunteer Alina. She was the one who started this project under protection and help of local Non-governmental organization called Solidarity tracks.

The work of Solidarity tracks is focusing on developing local community with help of European volunteers who are coming to Lefkada to work in different social integration projects. The biggest potential that I see in this organization is that projects are not focusing on activating, motivating or integrating only one age group. Solidarity tracks is trying to work with different generations and is because of this acting "intergenerational". This intergenerational projects are involving young people from other countries which are given especial quality, new sources of energy and different view into the work they do. Solidarity tracks is, with help of European Voluntary Service program, trying to activate local community. Programs of Solidarity tracks are



focusing on vulnerable groups: school age children, inactive young people, seniors etc.

I choose to work with this organization because I see big potential in volunteering work being involved in local community development. As well I support intergenerational activities because I believe that in social actions different generation can and should work together. With help of civil society, volunteering values, intercultural dimension and support of local community,

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**"I believe that, in social actions, different generation can and should work together"**

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Lefkada can successfully develop community program that helps to integrate people from different social backgrounds. This was one of the most important reasons why I decided to join this NGO as volunteer.

First when I moved to Lefkada I

was of course dealing with language barriers. I didn't spoke Greek. As well I heard Greek language before only few times in my life.". Solidarity tracks as my coordinating and hosting organization helped me with organizing language course of Greek language. Since I believe I have to put my effort in learning Greek on the beginning of my staying I start to search for alternatives.

I find it in Adult Education Center (Κέντρα Εκπαίδευσης Ενηλίκων) in Lefkada. General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning - Ministry of National Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs- has planned the educational program "Education of Immigrants in the Greek language, history and culture -ODYSSEUS" in whole Greece. I joined Greek course for immigrants which is been operated by the Institute for Continuing Adult Education.

The course was very intensive and took 9 hours per week for A1 (125hours).

I successfully finished the course at the end of June - after four months of staying in Lefkada.

# SENTENCES



**I like the rich gathering of people from different cultures and nations**

**I meet very nice people and I spent very good time**

**To facilitate this training was a very sexy experience**

**I met my friend: "the terrible child"**

**This training course brought a good opportunity to know each other. We share our different visions and for sure we will improve our realities**

**I feel that everyone learned a lot about volunteering and cooperation is the next step!**

**International discussion**

**Getting lost on a desert island with two friends**

**I appreciate I went deeper in my knowledge. Thank you**

**I love the spirit of this seminar and the participants were very close to each other .... BRAVO!**

**Making intercultural exchange on private and professional level**

**Networking with euro-med with old / new colleagues**

**I would like to say thanks for every one that contribute to changing my life**

**Cultural differences are the best thing to get knowledge and to generate links**

**Harmony, training environment, simplicity**



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# Partner organizations



Algeria	Association Scientifique les petits débrouillards de Tizi-Ouzou
Egypt	Development No Borders
France	TOGETHER
Greece	Solidarity Tracks
Greece	Service civil international-greece
Greece	Nfg Thasos Greece
Hungary	Youth Association from Carpathian Bassin
Italy	Instituto dei ciechi « Florio e Salamone »
Jordan	Al-Hayat Centre for Civil Society Development
Jordan	Land and Human to Advocate Progress (LHAP)
Latvia	NGO Jaunatne pariesaistisanos
Morocco	Tadamoun Tanger
Morocco	Association Attadamoun pour le développement et le Partenariat
Palestine	Azahra for thought and humanistice Science
Poland	Youth Activity Foundation Alternative
Portugal	Aventura Marao de Amarante
Romania	Association for the Youth and Student in Partium (PIHE)
Spain	Grupo de Desarrollo Rural Valle Del Guadalhorce
Slovenia	Universi skupaj z miadimi za mlade, koper
Tunisia	Club Culturel Ali Belhouane
Tunisia	Association des Jeunes méditerranéen pour les échanges culturels
Tunisia	Association des Amis de la Maison des Jeunes
Turkey	MCD Youth Club

## Future Projects



- Youth Exchange: “Minorities and immigrants of the EU, Unite!” in Romania
- Youth Exchange: “The Arab-EU spring” in Estonia
- Democracy Project: “Together in a European Diversity” in Luxemburg
- Study visit concerning “civil society” in Latvia
- Work camp: “Don’t give fish, teach to fish” in Hungary
- “Euromed Bus” in Turkey
- Training: “Recruitment leadership organization” Tunisia
- Building together our Euro Med eco-home in Greece
- Bringing additional value to our EVS projects in Greece
- “Integration of young people with fewer opportunities in the employability” in Greece



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