

DINAMIC EVS in Croatia

Venue: **Vodnjan/Dignano**, Istria County

Dates: from September/October 2015 to August/September 2016
(12 months)

Developing Innovative Network of Associations to Motivate Initiatives and Cooperation (DINAMIC) project aims to encourage young people to take active part in developing local communities. Volunteers from Italy, France and Spain will be hosted by 3 local organisations that are working in network, benefiting mutually of each other experience and knowledge. INFORMO works in the fields of European Project Management, entrepreneurship, youth mobility and employability. ECOMUSEUM activities concerns preservation of traditional customs, arts and crafts, ecological sustainability in agriculture and ecotourism. Open Popular University (POU-UPA) of Vodnjan/Dignano aims to foster life-long-learning, multiculturalism, creativity and culture. Volunteers will have the opportunity to participate in various activities that will be interconnected between these organisations, in order to improve local development. At the same time, they will experience community's life, getting in touch with Istrian multicultural environment and, finally yet importantly, they will enjoy each other companionship since they will be 10 participants in total.

Receiving Organisation n.1

INFORMO

This non-profit organisation has years of valuable experience in designing and implementing EU projects as well as organising and conducting seminars and workshops for youth and for those who are in unfavourable positions on the labour market. Informo's mission is to reach the following goals: contributing to local and social development through education, especially for youth, promoting EU values and citizenship as well as solidarity and tolerance, encouraging young people to undertake a pro-active role in the society. The association has already implemented successfully three EVS projects and is looking forward to starting this innovative EVS macro-project. Moreover, in year 2008, Informo has become National Contact Point for the international non-profit organisation EPA - European Projects Association, based in Bruxelles, Belgium.

Activities

- Writing, managing and implementing European projects
- Participation in brainstorming activities and generation of project ideas
- Communication with partners and stakeholders from Croatia and abroad
- Research, office management and ICT
- Weekly meetings with staff and volunteers of Associations ECOMUSEUM and POU-UPA to set common activities and related duties
- Preparation of materials and presentations on Erasmus + and other programs to provide valuable information to young people and local community. This is one of the most important roles of the Association. Presentations will that take place in Istria, and of course volunteers can make presentations themselves about volunteering through EVS programme

Receiving Organisation n.2

ECOMUSEUM “Istrian de Dignano”

This NGO aims at improving quality of life by increasing the value of cooperation, work and solidarity between its members and local community, especially groups at risk. To reach its goals the association fosters research, care, conservation and promotion of historical heritage, especially agricultural, via valorisation of human work products and creation of a recognizable cultural and touristic identity of Vodnjan/Dignano as a destination rich in local natural products. Moreover, Ecomuseum pursues maintenance and cultivation of farmland, redevelopment of neglected or abandoned buildings and agricultural land. The association focuses on revitalisation of material and immaterial rural culture, including traditional tools, trades, crafts, historical wooden carts, and protection of domestic animals.

Activities

- office and administration tasks: preparation of documents, responding to tourists' enquiries, organising meetings and visits;
- preparation of cultural events, exhibitions, presentations, tastings, workshops, celebrations;
- giving guidance to tourists about exhibits and region in general (rural life, wine-making process, olive harvest, explanation about ECOMUSEUM and town's history);
- managing and updating website and social media networks promoting the organisation;
- participation in brainstorming activities and preparation of project ideas;
- organizing work camps and looking for new partnerships;
- helping with running reception of the organic shop based in ECOMUSEUM;
- supporting organic farming and horticulture;
- preparation of products, items catalogue, looking for new exhibits;
- translation of documents, websites etc.

Receiving Organisation n.3

POU-UPA "Vodnjan-Dignano"

Open Popular University of "Vodnjan-Dignano" is an educational organisation whose objective is the transmission of theoretical and/or practical knowledge for people of all ages and backgrounds. It is a public body created in 2014 by Vodnjan-Dignano municipality, it has open entry policy and it is active on a local level giving the possibility to young and adult people to improve their knowledge and creativity as well as their awareness and participation in society. According to POU-UPA Vodnjan-Dignano's vision and mission, the development of lifelong learning concept through formal and informal education strategies/activities in the local community will help transforming it into a more aware, active, solidary and knowledgeable one. Volunteers will be actively involved in this mission, and they will have the chance to promote and develop their own ideas to make this brand-new organisation even more eclectic and trenchant.

Activities

- language conversation courses in his/her mother tongue, having the chance to socialise with locals to develop foreign language skills;
- preparation and implementation of educational workshops;
- Summer Camp activities for children (POU-UPA Vodnjan-Dignano will encourage volunteers who have the will to involve children in a non-formal learning process contriving different activities);
- organisation, promotion and implementation of projects related to art, tradition and culture such as theatre and film festivals, concerts, literary contests, intercultural seminars, etc.;
- outdoor activities such as the workshop "Moj kažun – La mia casita" at "Parco delle casite";
- organisation's meetings with staff and volunteers, proposing new ideas, expressing his/her own point of view and opinion about activities and organisational issues.
- Every volunteer will also have the opportunity to develop their mini-projects: presenting their countries, language, traditions, own workshops and activities, etc.

PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

To all selected volunteers will be sent *Info-kit* with all needed information including choosing best kind of transportation and all needed personal belongings. Association INFORMO will cooperate with Sending Organisations to make sure that candidates obtain *visa* and enrol to *Group Insurance Plan* for EVS volunteers.

Volunteers will live in Vodnjan-Dignano, where the service takes place. Their *apartments* are located only *10 minutes walking from the Receiving Organisations* (they are all located in the city centre).

Vodnjan-Dignano is a small town where all neighbours know each other and are always ready to help if it is needed. In any unexpected situation will happen, assigned *mentor and coordinators* will help to solve it.

Participants of DINAMIC project can rely on a *mentor* who is a person outside the organisations. Mentor helps volunteers to get to know specific of life in the region and Croatia in general. Moreover, mentor will be working as a conflict manager if any problem between volunteer and coordinator occurs.

If any health-related problem happens, volunteers will be able to obtain health care in the *medical centre* located in the town. Serious accidents can be treated in ambulatory health care in Pula, 10 km away from the town.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT

Vodnjan-Dignano is a typical medieval town 10 km away from the biggest city of Istria County, Pula-Pola. It is a charming place characterized by its narrow streets and houses made of stone, impressive cobbles from Gothic, Venetian, Renaissance and Baroque periods, and numerous churches. It almost feels like you travelled through time. Indeed, for many centuries Vodnjan-Dignano was the most important town of Southern Istria. During the Roman Empire period, it was very famous for its olive oil and today is again known for its world quality extravirgin olive oil.

Vodnjan-Dignano has a *bilingual culture* (Italian and Croatian) and heterogeneous 6.000 population, its *ethnic and religious minorities* are fully integrated. Main occupations include olive oil production, farming, viticulture, livestock breeding, trade and tourism. Vodnjan-Dignano is very vivacious, especially during summer. It hosts various cultural events, concerts and plays. Most recommended are New Olive Oil Fair, International Folk Festival "Leron", St. John's Fires, traditional desserts' tasting "Sweet Summer", art exhibition "ceramica in situ", Literary Award "Favelà" and Painting Ex Tempore. Absolutely not to be missed in August is famous "Festa dei Bumbari", a traditional celebration based on the ethnological heritage of the local population (Bumbari) where people enjoy themselves in different games, great music and excellent food.

Above all that, there are various sports and recreation activities to join in Vodnjan, such as cycling, pool and tennis.

Cinema and theatres can be found in the nearby city of **Pula-Pola**, which is connected to Vodnjan-Dignano by different means of transport (trains, private buses and a public bus line). Pula-Pola is a nice and lively city, especially during the summer: numerous open-air concerts, beach and boats parties, Pula Film Festival and International alternative theatre festival, traditional handmade fests where one can find original and unique things. Each year Pula-Pola hosts various worldwide known artists who usually perform in the Arena. In winter, there are also many events like the Book Fair and lots of jazz festivals.

Istrian peninsula is a lively region with beautiful ancient cities and numerous festivals: Wine Fair in Brtonigla-Verteneglio and in Poreč-Parenzo (Vinistria), Adria Festival in Umag-Umago, the LegendFest in Pićan-Pedena, Dance and Non-Verbal Theatre Festival in Svetvinčenat-Sanvicenti, Photo Ex Tempore in Novigrad-Cittanova, and much more. Due to its nature of border region Istria has a multicultural atmosphere; Istrians have tolerant and easygoing spirit and they are very friendly towards foreigners as well as eager to reveal Croatian, Italian and Istrian culture and traditions.

REQUIREMENTS

DINAMIC EVS project is open for all volunteers, regardless their previous experience and background. Project is addressed to everybody who meets general requirements for EVS programme (age, citizenship of the country allowed to participate the programme, etc.) and is motivated to develop the life of the community's members and their own skills.

Being truly interested in the project, enthusiasm in carrying out the tasks and will to obtain new experience are the most important factors for choosing the participants.

Sending Organisations, based on the project description and meetings with possible volunteers, conduct first stage of selection. After the recommendation of SOs, Receiving Organisations will conduct a Skype interview to get to know the candidates better and explain them the specific of the project. Based on that interview, each Receiving Organisation will evaluate if the candidate is committed to fulfil the activities and open to learning.

If you are interested, please contact us at
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