



**Buskerud
Fylkeskommune**



**Arbeidsinstituttet
avd.
Midfylket**



NEWSLETTER N° 4 - AUGUST 2010 **EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE**

Editorial

Summer finished and we all came back to work. Great and funny holidays around Europe were part of our experience. I had the experience to travel around some countries like Poland, Czech Republic, Italy, Germany, Denmark and Sweden as well Ellen around Ireland, Croatia, Poland and Slovakia; between others.

We started with our activities the 4th of August when we had the Mid-term Seminar, organized by the National Agency. One more time it took place in Oslo and we were 11 volunteers from Germany, Slovakia, Serbia, United Kingdom, Spain, France, Macedonia, Uruguay and Brazil. During the three days we worked on our achievements and we made a balance of our project, which you can find in this edition of our newsletter.

The 11th we returned to Arbeidsinstituttet to meet with all the stuff again. I finished painting some walls of the school that were not clean and unfinished draws, for the building to be nicer and to receive the students with a "nicer school".

The students already started the school year and on Friday we made them a welcome through the Blue Room, with some activities of ice-breaking, for them to know each other and to have some fun.

We started again with the difficult job of involving them on the games we organize and what is sad is that some of them just refuse to participate and they just stay sit down doing anything while we make a big effort for them to have a nice time

*About our living apartment, we have decided to start searching for another place because we are not enjoying our free time being in the countryside, away from all the social activities and we are being very along
w h e r e w e a r e s t a y i n g n o w .*

We are not so happy with the process of our project and we are trying to change some things on how it works and with the activities we are taking part in the community. We have started, by ourselves and the help of a very good friend we have here, Jan-Vidar Haraldsen, to get in touch with some people of the commune of Modum and Drammen so we can find another place to work.

For this and the next newsletters we will talk about the positive and negative aspects that our project has. We realized that we have had apart of this project summary all the things we do not like about this, our problems and fairs.

We came with lot of energies to change things we do not like here, to improve ourselves and be happier during this EVS project. We are opened to every kind of ideas from all of you.

With best regards,

Constanza

Mid term seminar of volunteers in Norway

On Wednesday the 4th of August until Friday the 06th, eleven volunteers in Norway participated in the second seminar –Mid term- of Youth in Action in Oslo.

It took part in the same hotel where was the first Arrival Seminar in May. The meeting was carried by two leaders from Norway, Linn Landmark and Anita Nordeide. Linn was also in the seminar in May and Anita is a Norwegian ex-volunteer in England.

The activities started in the morning, at 11:00, where all the volunteers made a presentation about themselves and their projects. We talked about how are the activities going and what we are looking for, in this new semester.



After lunch we enjoyed the sun doing the programmed activities outside, in the park that is in front the King`s Palace. It was very funny and pleasant to go outside the hotel. The volunteers from Narvik, (north of Norway), were really looking forward to enjoy the sun. They said that there it is raining most of the time and that we should not depreciate the good weather. As we are from South America we do not think too much on going outside on a sunny day because we always have the sun shining all the year. Now we can see how important and different it is here. Anyway, we need to save sun energy for next winter. The weather here will be something totally new for us and maybe also quite difficult to deal with so much cold.



In the park we talked about “What is learning?” and each one of us thought about their own process of learning during life and we shared this with the others. During this time we thought what we would like to learn in this experience, what we learned in our life until now, what we have learned more and less, what we want to learn and how to plan to do this in the right way. We made a retrospective of our life since our birth until now by drawing a “life river”.

We also talked about the experiences we have had during this months as the food we have tried, things we have seen and we also listened the others experiences.

The second day we started with some energizing games, dancing and with some music to wake us up. After this we did an interesting activity called “Light a Candle”. It was 10 candles, which 5 should be always on and 5 off. We sit down in the floor making a circle and we turned on one light when we said a good experience we have had here during our EVS and we turned one candle off when it was a bad experience.

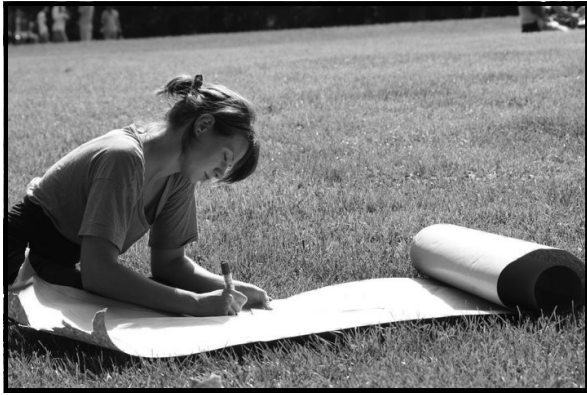
Each of us told good and bad things, funny and boring stories, happy and sad moments and we all could know more of each other. In this moment we had opportunity to value what has happened here and to think on how the others are enjoying this experience too.

Linn explained us a little bit more about the Youth Pass and talked a bit about our Mentor and how to deal with some conflicts.

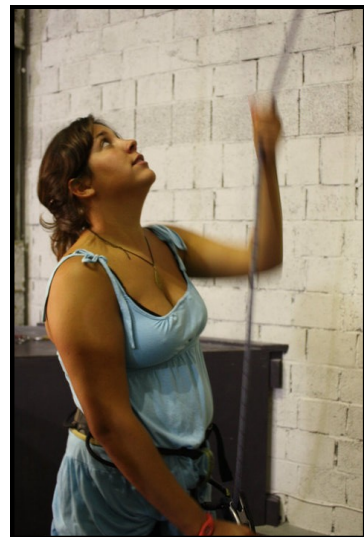
From the National Agency, Einar Rafn Guðbrandsson and Eilen Sunniva Bergvik, come to speak how we were going with our project and we asked them some questions but they did not give us precise answers about what we wanted to know.



In the Folkmuseum we could learn more about the History of Norway, about the architecture of the houses and how was the life some years ago. For sure, one of the best things was to go climbing, a great thing that some of us tried by the first time, we all laughed and sweated a lot.



Unlikely, this was the last seminar with all the volunteers of our period. We would love to meet again because we did a very good team and for sure we will try another way to meet again.



PROJECT BALANCE

Ellen

The first months in Norway went a little bit difficult for me. The language communication is the big problem that I had and however, is difficult to make friends, to development myself and to work.

I was feeling sad in the two first months here, but I guess this is normal, after all I changed all my life after a flight until Norway. I was in the summer and after 17 hours I was with snow in my hands. This is wonderful, but also can be strange and scary.

One reason to feel sad is because I couldn't do anything by myself. Always I needed someone to help me and this brings frustration in my life. I always had been independent

Living in countryside is more difficult to meet people and to make friends. Transport buses or trains is too expensive in Norway and I can't go to city to meet people always and in Brazil I had a lot of friends near me all the time. I was feeling isolated sometimes. But I can say the friends that I made are really very good friends, but they are not Norwegian. I feel difficult to have a relationship with Norwegian people and I guess I need more friends and I would like to have Norwegian friends, to know more about what they think and to have more contact with the culture.

I really miss my family and my friends very much, but I know I need to have friends here and to forget during this year my friends in Brazil. Friends are always friends and I am sure they are there waiting for me and my friendship with them will be always the same. For this I am not spending a lot of time on internet and I am talking only with my family two times a week. I decided to live completely here in Norway. This is an opportunity that I have to live here and I need to enjoy that.

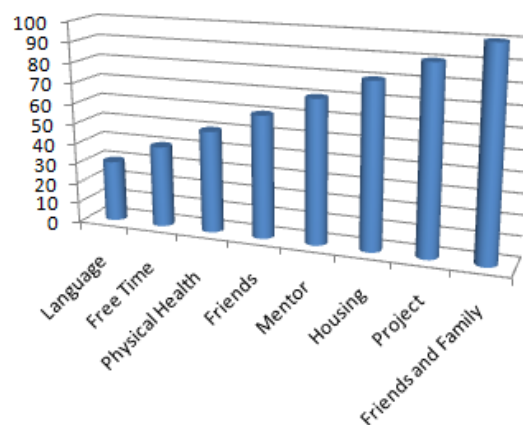
I changed my mentor and I hope to have more activities and help now. Anyway, I know I can't wait someone do anything for me if they do not do it. I need to do everything by myself.

About my project, I really like to work with children, but also I want to do more activities with teenagers. I have some plans to project Blue Room and I guess it will work well this semester and I want to found more activities in the commune of Modum .

Even with the problems that I had in last semester, I can say I learned a lot and now I want to do everything different to valorize my experience here. I had good time in this vacation by myself thinking about my life and I took the decision to do a happy experience and to do my best to do everything I need to do. Is my responsibility makes it count to me and to is part in this project and in my life.

I am trying to use my free time better, studying English and Norwegian, watching movies in English without subtitles and exercising. I was not using my free time to productive things, but now I know this and I am changing my life in this way and thinking more about my health, eating good food, exercising and reading good books.

In the graphic, you can see my own evaluation about my life and I hope to make another soon with everything 100%.



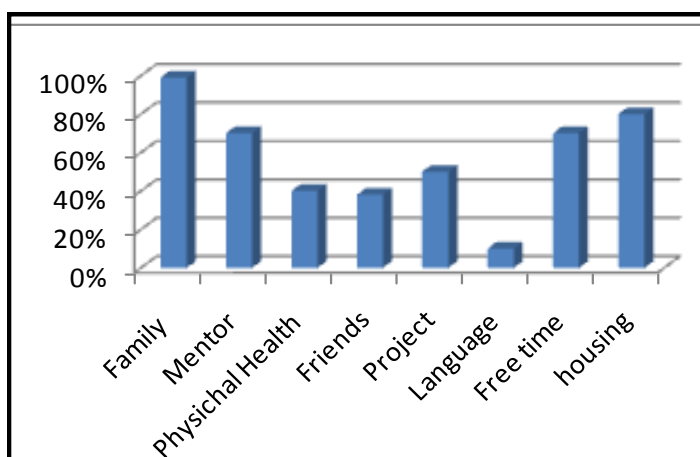
Constanza

Before coming here my mentor had told me how this school worked, but as always happens, it is not the same to read something than to live it.

The way that this school uses to teach the youth is very different from what I have in my country or than the regular education. Let me say that it is being quite hard to adapt to it.

The student here is not obligated to do anything he/she does not want to do, there are not too much limits in this sense. If they want they can be in or outside of the class whenever they want without the teacher tells them anything, they don't have regular classes where the teacher gives one lesson and they have to sit down and study; they just practice, and the youth they work with has some difficulties on learning, behavior and psychological problems.

During the seminar we worked with an EVS WHEEL that it is a graphic of the balance of some points that we should improve while our stay in Norway and of what we have achieved until now. Here it goes.



I will explain now point by point;

FAMILY. The last two years I was living by myself in another city of my country because of the studies. Anyway, this is the first time in life I travel so long away from home and I thought that I would miss my family. To be truth until now I have had no problems not to have them here.

MENTOR. He organized everything for me to come here and I really appreciate this. He has taken care of inviting us for dinner, buy

flowers for our house, and taken us to some trips. The problem is that when I arrived here I felt I did not have many activities to work with at the school and out (in other institution or place). Thor has been sick and not coming to the school for lot of time, now he is coming just part time, and I would need an active mentor that is always thinks on different activities for me to do, to feel better and to do some things that help and teach me things for my future life.

FISICAL HEALTH. It is great that at AIM they gave us the opportunity to go to a swimming pool whenever we want and so we can practice some sport. The percentage is not very good because I should exercise more by myself to be healthier. This is my complete fault.

FRIENDS. I never supposed that it would be so much difference in the social aspect between my culture and here. I have been here for five months and the number of people I know is not very wide and the most of them are not Norwegian. Of course that being in another country where you are alone, you need to make new friends but here is not the best country for this. Norwegians are quite complicated to meet, indeed with the students at AIM that they do not want to talk with us.

PROJECT. It changed a lot from what the plans where. I thought I would be more active here, but I am not. I am everyday at AI and sometimes there are not very encouraging and motivating activities to do. Because at the end that is the clue. Do something now that is useful for our future as professional and do not spend the time or waste it doing things that will not be constructive when I come back to my country and to be psychologically happy.

For this term I want to get some voluntary job in another place out of Arbeidsinstituttet, like at the commune of where we live and at some cultural place. Working here makes me feel quite alone and that is one of the things why I do not get personal satisfaction when working here. It is great to work with people you enjoy and spend nice time with. I have started thinking on some kind of project in the commune, to make things more interesting and to know more the commune and locals where I am living. I would like to include some of the volunteers that are working in Narvik and in Fyresdal to join this project and help me on its process.

LANGUAGE. Naturally I am understanding something of Norwegian language, in comparison than what I did when I arrived. The problem is that it is not enough to have a conversation and manage well as to live here. I have not sit down at home to study by myself and I have had no Norwegian classes as well (just six classes in five months). One of the rights of the program is that the hosting organization need to give the volunteer language course and this has not being followed as planned. This is one of the things that after our 5th month of stay here in Norway, as well as the work activities should be already solved.

FREE TIME. In this country the timetable of work is very good because you leave work quite early and you have plenty of time to do other things. Unlikely in the town where I live, I have not found many activities to do outside home and I am not taking advantage of this free time. Anyway, better than do anything, I have started reading and painting at home which I like a lot. The best would be go out and do some socializing activity, what we as human beings and young people need. Very often I go walking through the countryside, to the forest and mountains, which is great and makes me know better the country.

HOUSING. The house is very nice; I have everything I need there to live well. The only thing is that it should be better to be living in the city where I can have other activities that just work and enjoy a little bit meeting people and having fun.

Summer rainy summer and Bær, for everyone!

This has been the rainiest have been thinking after our this, we don't want to see the

Raining all the time... one day The day is quite long, nowadays 22:30 and it comes again at could read a book during the artificial light, but now, unlikely it



summer of the last years and we stay here: "If the Summer is like winter!

sunny and three days raining! there is light in the sky until about 04:00am. Some weeks ago you night being outside without any is getting darker day after day.

With a nice sun shining during is a good day), the nature has answered very well, with much green and flowers in every place. One of the most interesting things that happens here, which we have never seen before in our continent, is fruits growing up like bushes in the forest and next to the roads. Is wonderful to see and to eat small fruits while jogging! Every kind of raspberries (bær) and there are also many apple trees at the entrance of the houses, in front of the road. Blåbær, bringebær, tyttebær, jordbær, stikkelsbær, rips, bjørnebær are some of the most typical berries that grow up by themselves.

We can see people working on their gardens, cutting the grass, the bushes, the tress and taking care of the flowers. Everything grew up very fast after winter, the green exploded after the snow melted. Gardens are beautiful during the summer time; after all, it is the only season you can enjoy later, everything is under



The citizens use this jams, cakes, ice-cream Norwegian government sell these home-made of the reasons why because alcohol in expensive. In this alcoholic drink, stronger go to a "vinmonopolet"

high. Approximately, 0.7l of vodka can cost 400 kr., which is 50 Euros.

and live it, because the snow.

fruits to make liqueur, and others. The does not authorize to drinks with alcohol. One people do this is Norway is very country, to buy an than beer you need to where the prices are

This liqueur is excellent for the winter when it is minus 25 or 30 degrees and it helps to warm yourself up and enjoy a sweet drink next to the fireplace.

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