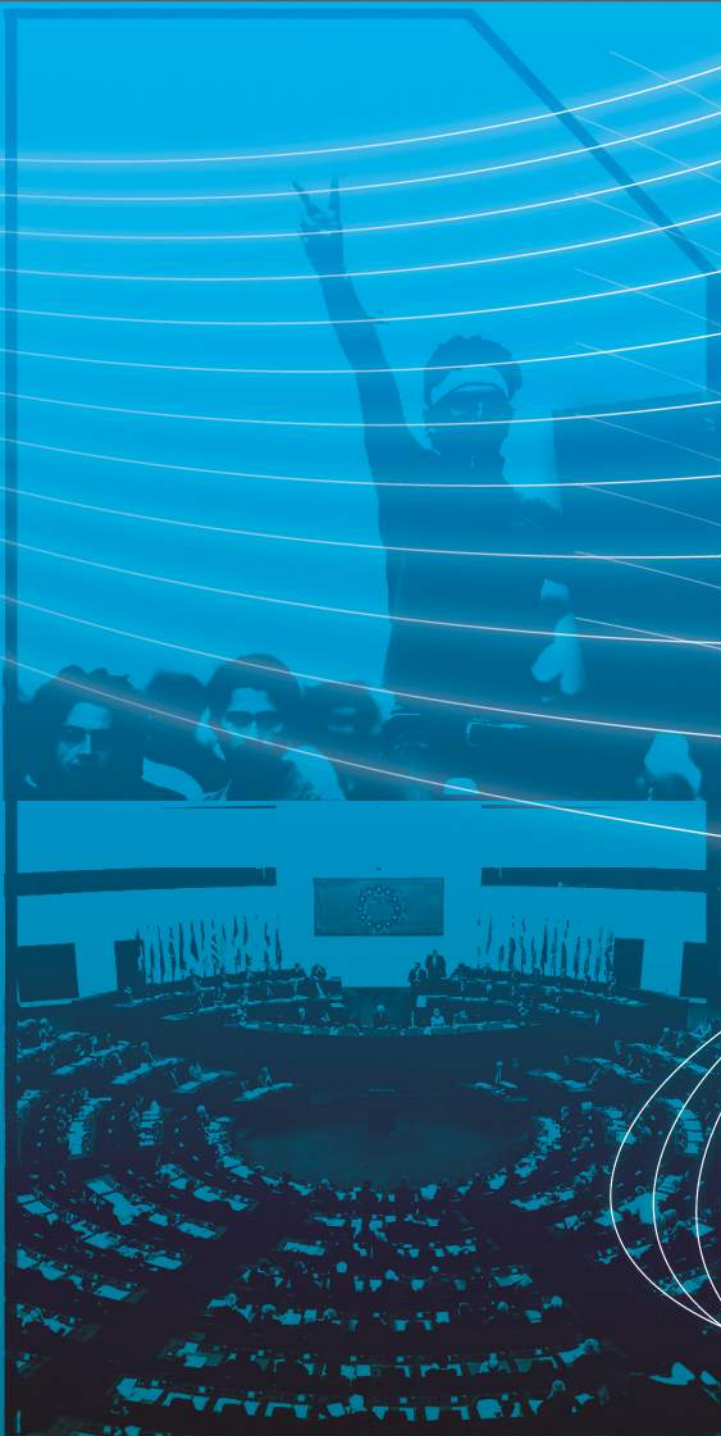




LEAD

Learning European Active Democracy



Learning European Active Democracy



ABOUT ARDR

Regional Association for Rural Development

ARDR (Regional Association for Rural Development) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization that aims to increase the capacity of local communities for self-management and sustainable economic and community development.

ARDR is a regional organization that works to network different communities so they can work together to benefit their residents and improve the quality of life for everyone. The projects of ARDR are designed to serve the entire community, not just public officials or youth, but people of all ages and all experience levels. Besides, ARDR is one of the organizations in Romania actively engaged in Youth In Action Program of the European Commission, particularly in EVS (European Voluntary Service). It's one of the famous hosting organizations of volunteers in Romania.

ARDR has offices both in Targiu Jiu (Gorj County) and Craiova (Dolj County).

The team of ARDR has extensive experience in working with hosting, sending and coordinating EVS projects dating back to 2002. The experience consisted in writing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of several EVS projects, developed by Youngsters without Borders, association where some of the actual members of ARDR used to activate. The projects where the team gained their experience were:

1. "Express Yourself" 2003 – RO – 21 – 8 hosting projects of either 6,9, 12 months of volunteers from France, Belgium, Sweden, UK, Spain .
2. "Experience And Learn" – Multilateral EVS Project with Third Countries
01.07.2005 – 01.05.2006 Partners: Serbia Montenegro, Macedonia, Romania and France
Sending 2 Romanian Volunteers and 2 French Volunteers to Serbia and Macedonia
3. "Experience And Learn" – Multilateral EVS Project with Third Countries
01.07.2005 – 01.05.2006
Partners: Serbia Montenegro, Macedonia, Romania and Netherlands
Coordinating Organization – Youngsters without Borders – Romania
4. "Me and the Society" 2005 – RO -6
Short term EVS for young people with Special needs
24.05.2005 – 24.08.2005 – Hosting 4 young volunteers with special needs. The 4 youngsters come from a Folk High School in Denmark dealing with young people with special needs
5. "Networking for European Citizenship" 2005 – RO-2
Partners: Sending Organization: Germany
Hosting Varinia Witec – Germany – 12 months
ARDR as a structure, has played the direct role of monitoring and evaluating the centralized multi-lateral EVS program "Networking for European Citizenship"- 126346-2.2.b-RO-2-2006-R1 between Denmark, Portugal, Albania, Serbia, Macedonia, and Romania. In this role as monitor & evaluator, ARDR has conducted weekly

meetings with 4 volunteers from Albania, Macedonia and Serbia; weekly descriptions of tasks; monthly self-evaluations with qualitative & quantitative questions measuring how each volunteer perceives him/herself; monthly in-depth interviews with the volunteers; and monthly evaluations from the project Coordinator.

6. Yes for EVS – RO-21-2-2008 – R1.

YES for EVS is a Group EVS project implemented in 6 communities from Gorj County – South West Romania which hosted 13 young volunteers from Programme Countries, Eastern Europe and Caucasus. ARDR played the role of both hosting as well as coordinating organization.

ARDR team conducted several EVS projects successfully, and now new projects are in process as well. It also increases the number of hosted volunteers from the different countries of the world.

WHAT IS EVS?

„EVS – New opportunity”

In our opinion it's quite hard to maintain that EVS is something particular. EVS itself has multiple dimensions, and it can be defined from different points of views and aspects. But what is certain about EVS is that it is an opportunity.

So, we think that “opportunity” is a wonderful word to be used for defining EVS. EVS therefore is an opportunity to... Yes, it is an opportunity to... Then everyone defines for himself/herself what an opportunity it is. The definition also depends on a person, his/her goals, expectations, values, mentality etc.

Essence of EVS – process of self-development

But we used the word “opportunity” also because we are confident that it's not certain or sure that every person will gain everything that EVS can provide. EVS gives a person the opportunity, but the rest, we mean using that opportunity effectively, depends on a person, on his/her willingness and abilities to use the opportunity. So here is the essence of EVS: EVS is a process of self-development.

But to develop yourself you should explore and use the potential you have. So, EVS is also a process of self-exploration, self-assessment and self-realization.

EVS is an opportunity to recognize yourself. One can be sure that he/she knows everything about himself/herself, but once you find yourself in a completely different environment (national, cultural, religious, geographical) you meet new challenges, therefore you react to them in a specific way, trying to overcome them by minimum expenses. Then you realize that you didn't know about specific abilities or also weaknesses that you have.

EVS – opportunity to try.....

EVS is an opportunity to try, to try everything, everywhere you want. It's a unique opportunity to try whatever once you thought about or even didn't think being sure that you cannot do that. On EVS you can try whatever you want, because here you have the right to fail. You are in the process of self-exploration, self-realization, so failures are expected and normal here, and you are not going to be punished for failure, because you are not an employee, you are a volunteer who seeks to develop himself/herself by gaining new skills and knowledge.

ing yourself, it's also exploring the world around you just in a little scale. Once exploring yourself, you should also explore others; you are surrounded with, to understand their culture, mentality, way of thinking and living. To understand yourself and to find your place you should understand also others. And when you find your place among others, you start to respect their culture, habits, mentality, way of acting, even if it is quite different from your own. So, EVS also brings up respect and tolerance to others' culture. EVS is an opportunity to become an active citizen. EVS is a way of developing particular psychology and way of thinking inside the volunteers to make them active citizens. We can write about EVS a lot of pages and give dozens of definitions, but in my opinion as simple you are in your thoughts, as understandable they are. So, all in all EVS is the opportunity which should be used once by every young person, as a very useful element of the process of development.

Team of LEAD Project

WHAT IS EVS?

„A time only for me, to take stock of the situation,,

Pieces of a volunteer journal

For me.....

„EVS is a great possibility to have time for yourself, to put on trial to be lonely and to be alone. I'm so glad that in English exists this difference of expressions.

Being alone is great –you can literally restart your life- you are completely free, you can really do whatever you want. Also rediscover yourself in all the sides, in particular those which in the frantic real world are considered superfluous and you are induced to set aside: to enjoy people and friends, to enjoy the flow of a river or the company of a dog, to not have schedules and restrictions, to do things just because they are beautiful, to study something just because it is interesting and everything because you feel that it is exactly what you want to do in that moment! This is the “Da” time, Yes in Romanian.

Discover.....

If you choose the right project and the right country for you, you will enjoy the possibility of trying a job or another if the first one is not suitable, you will learn what you have always wanted to learn. You will learn also to live in another country without knowing the language, without knowing where the shops and your house exactly are! You can travel to discover all the country without much money and everybody will be nice to you only because you are a stranger volunteer from an exotic country! Staying in a country not being a tourist and not being a traveler, living as people live with the same currency and the same amount of money.. But in your head you will bring with you your own life experience, your own culture and it will let you see the wonders and contradictions of the hosting community that people there had maybe never known.

Past vs Present

Before coming here I was not happy, I was studying and studying and studying and at the same time looking for a job which did not arrive, inscribing for masters that were not activated, starting internships who did not bring me anywhere.

Then I experimented the joy, the happiness and the strength to discover myself again, to see my possibilities and my limits, to meet different people every day, to be lazy, to not work, to not worry about studying, working, about money, about food, about parents, about nothing. To rediscover the pleasure of watching movies, of listening to music, of studying just because I'm interested in this or that issue, to cook for someone, to clean a dirty (believe me: very dirty!) bathroom willingly, to stay in your dining room with your mates happily without saying a word, without expectations, to try to do hitch-hiking, to enjoy people who invite you for lunch after having talk with you not more than 5 minutes. A time only for me, to take stock of the situation. Even if the association may not be the most organized, even if your mates may not be as you would want them, even if the city is the ugliest of the country!

But what about future ...?

When someone asked me about my feelings some days ago, I answer that I felt in a loop: at the beginning, when I arrived in June everything was a big "Boh" (Boh in Italian means "I do not know" and as David –my Armenian flat mate- said it conveys very well the status of confusion and indecision) and now I had come back in the same status: a big boh! In the meanwhile there was the "Da", the dream, the world of possibilities: in Romania all is possible and things which should work do not, things that may never work, actually these work! It is not only funny, I would say great because of being free. If nothing is sure, everything can be built ex novo! And this is a possibility that we have every day of our life: reset & restart, reset & restart. But it has been also sad: when I was in the -let's say- "boh phases" I have been very very lonely as never in my life. Far from the support of my family and friends with people that sometimes do not care of you or it seems like this, maybe some volunteers finished their service before the ending time and it is like living in a Big Brother show, without perspective and landmarks. Maybe, then, you have not learnt well the language of the hosting country so you do not have so many local friends, maybe you feel that nobody can deeply understand you and you miss home and you only want to come back. This is also EVS.

Now I am at the end of my EVS and I have a file excel full of my professional purposes for the future: I have a lot of trust and new perspectives. But some days ago I felt very lonely. I have some friends here, yes friends, but in one week we all will be kilometers far from each other and what will be remained? Beautiful memories, a big amount of friends in Face book and the consciousness that in some places of the world there will be someone who will always welcome like one of the family: great! But what about the daily life once come back?

"E cossitta..."

And now is coming the time of "E cossitta..". It is an expression that I built some years ago and which I use when I have nothing to say, just to break the silence.. It means more or less "like this, so", "asa" in Romanian. It is the time of equilibrium, of acceptance, the time to take the good from everything and to pull away the bad. The time for saying thank for everything, the time of a calm awareness, in which you appreciate the good of your common daily life and you want to come back home but not to escape, just to restart, to build again your

life, more conscious of your strengths and of your possibilities, more flexible and self-confident and also open to work on the several limits that you have discovered in yourself.

Finally I want to say that EVS is a time of pause, a time of reflection on your life and a time to recharge the batteries, an opportunity to check what is important for you and what do you want to do with your life”.

Luisa Maniezzo – the „thinker” of the team

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP VIA EVS

personal opinion

„Volunteers - a wonderful example of active citizenship”

A little bit of terminology

Both “citizenship” and “active citizenship” are social categories. But “citizenship” is also a legal category, while “active citizenship” is not a legal category. One can call it also a philosophy.

Everyone should be a citizen of a country, because it's forced by the law, though some people in the world are often without any citizenship. Anyway that status of not having any citizenship is supposed to be temporal.

But no one is forced to be an active citizenship, there is no law forcing a person to be an active citizen, that's why we can assume that “active citizenship” is not a legal category. One is an active citizen if he/she wants it. In this case the motivator is willingness and desire to be an active citizen.

Responsibility

Citizenship is a legal contract between a person and a state, in which both sides have their rights and responsibilities, which are defined by the laws. Every citizen has rights and responsibilities, but an active citizen fully enjoys his/her rights and fulfills responsibilities in a balanced way. In a lot of countries all the citizens have the right of free healthcare, but going to the vote is not compulsory.

Voting itself can be assumed both as a right and a responsibility. Active citizen, in spite of citizen, keeps the balance between the rights and the responsibilities.

But not only have the citizens of the state had rights and responsibilities. People who are not the citizens of the state have some responsibilities and rights as well. So, one can be an active citizen without being a citizen of the state. If one lives in a community for some period of time, he/she has to respect the rules of that community, to accept and adapt to their way of living, to be integrated into the community. It means also that the community where you live has its direct and indirect influence on your daily life. So, whatever happens in this community also concerns to you and your interests. It means that you are also engaged in daily life of the community, and if you have responsibilities you have also rights.

A way of bringing up active citizens

Volunteering via EVS is also a way of being an active citizen, without being a citizen of the country of volunteering. As we mentioned above the motivator of an active citizen is mainly the willingness and desire. In the case of volunteering also the motivators are mainly the willingness and desire, as volunteers have no any financial benefit from it.

So, volunteers are a wonderful example of active citizens, who want to have an influence on a community, changing something or making someone feel responsible through enjoying the rights and fulfilling the responsibilities in a balanced way.

EVS is not just doing some job on a voluntary basis without being paid, it's not just an intercultural exchange or traveling. EVS is a unique way of bringing up active citizens. EVS is a way of developing particular psychology and way of thinking inside the volunteers to make them active citizens. Through the period of volunteering the volunteer passes particular stages of becoming an active citizen.

First you are placed into a community, which you don't know, which has completely different cultural background, values, rules and traditions. It's a completely new environment for the volunteer. In this case, the volunteer is like a new-born child, who also appears in a different for him/her environment and starts to adapt to it from the first seconds of his/her life. And this adapting process is the process of socialization. So, the volunteer passes through another stage of socialization and explores the community in order to find his/her place in that community. It's the first step in being an active citizenship: finding your own place, position in the community.

On the next step the volunteer is getting interested in gaining knowledge and information about the community and on how the things work there, as he/she realizes that his/her daily life is directly or indirectly influenced by the community and especially the decisions made inside the community. If we take the hosting organization as a mini-community, it's quite obvious that the decisions made and the rules in force there have their significant impact on the volunteer's life.

On the next step, when the volunteer gains particular information and knowledge, he/she seeks to be engaged in decision-making process in order to get hold over the process which affects his/her life and hold people making decisions responsible.

So, when the volunteer starts to use the set of the rights and responsibilities he is endowed with, an active citizen is appearing. Through all the period of volunteering this active citizen develops and learns better and more effective ways to be engaged in the community's life and to affect the decision-making process. Active citizens become a kind of "watchdogs" for the authorities, which make them to work in a more effective way. In the 21st century developed countries started to realize that if they want to exist and go on developing they should have effective governments and affective way of management, which is impossible if there is a lack of balanced opposition, which will hold the authorities and those making decisions responsible for their activities. So, it's not by chance that developed countries started to spend huge amounts of money on developing active citizenship and bringing up active citizens.

One of the examples is Youth In Action Programme of the European Commission, including EVS, with its huge budget.

In conclusion, EVS is a unique tool of bringing up active citizens from different countries of the world and developing active citizenship. It can work effectively as both in the case of active citizenship and volunteering the motivator is the willingness and desire to be active.

Description of activities

Our team:

David Manukian – the „conscientious” guy and...philosopher of the team



Davit Manukyan – Armenia



Flavio Tamburanno – Italy



Giuseppe Abignente - Italy



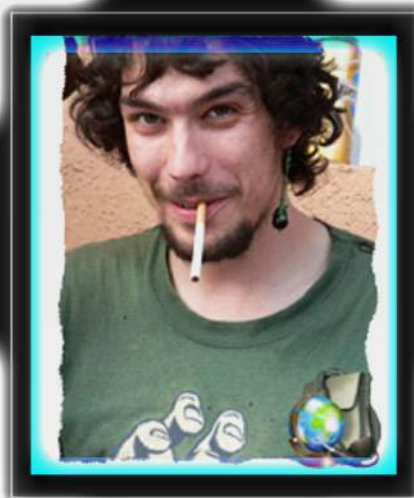
Anna Raymi – Spain



Luisa Maniezo - Italy



Marco Marini – Italy



Alfredo Fernandez Ojeda – Spain



Marco Salsi – Italy

Our first activity in this project (L.E.A.D.) was a caravan on European Parliamentary Elections (June 7, 2009) and a workshop about the EU and its' impact on Romania. This activity was a group activity, common for all the volunteers of L.E.A.D. project. The caravan and the workshop were conducted in three cities of Oltenia Region: Valcea, Turnu Severin and Craiova, between the 1st and the 5th of June.



The workshops started in Ramnicu Valcea on 2nd of June at the high school - Colegiul Tehnic Energetic. On 3rd of June, the Caravan stopped in Severin where the activities took place inside the University Center and on 5th of June the caravan ended in Craiova where an international Seminary – [the Regional Conference](#) - was presented at the Faculty of Agronomy, in Aula Buia.

The activities conducted were based on interactive debates involving also practical parts: the distribution of questionnaires - in order to check the level of knowledge on European Union affairs; presentations on topics regarding the legal and historical side of the European Union, the Parliament election system, the impact that the European Union have started to have in Romania, the Bologna process. We used short movies to sustain the presentations and ideas – a 2 minutes video recorded on the main road of Musetesti, in which it shows how we practiced our knowledge of Romanian language and at the end of the workshops a 15 minutes movie containing interviews with the studens in Craiova about UE.



The workshops also included dynamic activities like creating as many 10cm cubes as possible in 15 minutes or “the donkeys” which consisted on presenting a problem that students had to resolve. The underlining meaning of these activities was to show that countries need to reach an agreement, and sometimes to compromise, in order to enjoy their resources.

At the closing of the workshop, a series of prizes were given to the students with the highest scores in the questionnaire delivered.

During the caravan we spread posters and flyers, informing about the European Parliamentary Elections and encouraging people to participate in the elections.



Davit Manukyan – Armenia

After LEAD Caravan, my next activity has been being an online counselor of EVS. I had my official e-mail account of a counselor and a blog on www.yesforevs.eu web-site, where I was sharing my impressions about EVS, our project, putting also photos and other media files. As an EVS counselor I had the responsibility to give appropriate information about EVS, projects implemented by ARDR upon requests of those young people who were interested in volunteering.

During the activity different young people from Armenia sent me e-mails asking different, sometimes even personal questions concerning to the way and the process of volunteering. I did my best to provide them relevant information which would help them to make a decision. Some of them came to Romania as volunteers, some of them didn't.



My final activity in L.E.A.D. project was a reportage on stray dogs of Craiova. The issue of stray (abandoned) dogs is one of the serious issues of Romania, particularly of Craiova. That was obvious even to a person like me, who is not a Romanian. As advocating for active citizenship, we are interested in arising issues which are in the core of the community's daily life and influence on the citizens' daily life. So, I decided to investigate that topic, understand it as well as I can and to make a reportage on it. In this way active citizens make the authorities pay attention to their concerns and conduct particular policies to satisfy the demands of those they are elected by and who they are countable to.

I conducted a sociological survey on the issue among 100 inhabitants of Craiova, interviewed people in the streets, a relevant representative of the City Hall and the vice-president of "Innocent souls" association, which is one of the animal rights' protection organizations in Craiova. In the result I made a reportage, lasting about 14 minutes.

Luisa Maniezzo – Italy

During my volunteering I participated in these activities

Learn writing projects

We have a great idea about writing a project for the organization TRUST, a local Roma NGO active in the Human Rights, Youth and educational fields

In order to learn writing, obtaining the funds and managing projects, we worked in two projects to be applied to the:

Council of Europe: "The intercultural debate as a way to fight Roma school segregation" is a project that we wrote in order to increase the awareness in the community of Craiova about the discrimination and the segregation in the educational field, of which Roma youngsters suffer. The project has a first part of study and research, followed by a fair of NGOs with workshops and conferences. In order to develop this project we are asking a grant to the Council of Europe. The purpose is putting in touch all the interested parts in Roma scholar integration: NGOs, Public Institutions, students and a wide audience generally who will have the chance to create a network among them. We would want to establish the Fair as a yearly appointment, focusing the general attention on the problem, as an occasion to update, to discuss and to monitoring the work of the NGOs and their outputs.

And to the [European Commission \(an EVS\)](#): we had the chance to get in touch with T.R.U.S.T. foundation, which works to guarantee the respect of human rights among the Roma community in Craiova. In fact, Craiova has one of the biggest Roma Community in Romania and, as we learnt from the experts working at T.R.U.S.T., the respect of human rights among Roma people is quite far to be an achieved goal in this community. Particularly we focused our attention on the problem of school segregation because, as we were taught by TRUST staff, in Craiova there are three different kinds of segregated schools: “residential segregated” ones, where pupils are entirely Roma, “segregated per class” ones, where there are classes for Roma children and classes for non Roma children, and “segregated per building” ones, where there are different buildings for Roma children and non Roma children. Beyond the total lack of integration and the consequent increase of racism, this segregation brings also a big gap in between the quality of education for Roma children and non Roma ones, condemning Roma children to have a worse kind of teaching.

We thought to write a project in which volunteers were called to work in this context. Our idea was to let volunteers organize and implement after-school sport activities and a summer camp with Roma and non Roma children, in order to promote cultural exchange in between the volunteers and the children and in between Roma children and non Roma ones. We strongly believe that such experiences can be an important chance to promote integration among the different part involved. This idea was also perfectly fitting with the aim of the Youth In Action programme, Action 2, which gives grants for EVS projects, so we started to give a concrete aspect to our thoughts. We started consulting our partner [T.R.U.S.T.](#) in order to ask confirmation of the value of our ideas and if they could concretely meet the needs of the community. After listening to some important suggestions and advice, we started to write the project.

We thought to involve 8 volunteers, 4 from Caucasus and 4 from European member countries, for six months, starting from February to July 2010. Bearing in mind our own experience as volunteers, we tried to facilitate as much as possible the work of the future volunteers: we tried to establish partnerships with schools and institutions, with whom volunteers should work. This part of the project writing was particularly hard because it is quite difficult moving in the hosting community as a foreigner: first of all because of the language (we still do not speak any romanian!!!) and furthermore because you do not know who can help you for that particular need. In order to facilitate this process, the staff of A.R.D.R. and E.P.Y.D. gave us their support.

These are the main steps of this activity:

- - attending workshops on the methodology and studying the documentation material and the guides
- - establishing a strong relationship of collaboration with TRUST, a local Roma NGO active in the Human Rights, Youth and educational fields.
- - through a “learning by doing” methodology we organized meetings among us visits to the target community
- - establish contacts and collaborations with foreigner associations
- - writing the call and the application forms

Objective: Achieve Project management skills, help the association in his job, work in group

Impact: Raise the awareness on intercultural issues and work for integration. The EVS project was approved.

Target group: Local Roma children

Community Needs Analysis

We are conducting a research, through analysis of secondary data, interviews to the directors of the schools, the teachers, focus group with the children, interviews with the representatives of the local associations of the villages of Malu Mare, Carcea and Daneti. After gathering and studying all this material we worked at writing reports, making a description and a diagnosis of the community. The idea was to present this reports to the teachers, discuss about them and establish the strengths and weaknesses of their communities – with a focus on youth – and strategies to develop the youth community through EVS. Other purposes of our demarches were to test the openness of the community – especially the openness of youngsters and teachers – of getting involved in this kind of long-term and complex educational programmes; to establish partnerships with them in order to have groups of support to run EVS projects over there

- **Objective:** Assess needs and opportunities of the local communities in order to implement EVS projects
- **Impact:** Mobilization of the communities, creation of network and partnerships
- **Target group:** relevant stakeholders of the villages in the educational field



Research on transition:

I had started a research with Anna on illegal emigration in the Communist period, but after a first documentation and some meetings between us and with some experts we left it in order to give more time to others.

Writing brochures

Marco Salsi and I collaborated with Europe direct, the local desk of European Union. Our referents were Daniel, the boss, and Cristiana, a volunteer who was working with us. At the beginning it seemed that they wanted to involve us in a lot of their activities, but then we focused on writing brochures on topics that they had individuated. These are the main steps of our activity:

- - two first meetings in order to know each other and decide in which activities work together;
- - collection and sharing of documentation about the issues of the brochures;
- - establishing of the structure and, consequently, of the contents of the brochure.



We finished a brochure concerning “Climate change and Energy European Politics” and we wanted to start working on the one on “Job opportunities in the European market”. But we soon realized that they were not so interested in our job because we did not have feed-back from them, they neither publish the first brochure. Anyway they have always been very nice. Maybe they do not need more help.

- **Objective:** Increasing the awareness on relevant European issues, work in group
- **Impact:** Establish or strengthen relationships with local associations
- **Target group:** Local associations and people of the County in general

Learning languages (Romanian and English)

I attended Romanian lessons as long as they were delivered. My knowledge of Romanian has increased also thanks to the daily life activities (going to the shops, going out with Romanian friends, collaborating with local associations).

I attended English lessons for one month with mother tongue speakers at the University of Craiova. We have known the teachers and we go out together. The study material for every activity was in English and, sometimes, also the language work was English.

Objective: Be able to communicate using foreign languages

Impacts: Acquire the ability to express and understand foreign languages according to my needs; achieve a positive attitude towards cultural differences and intercultural communication.

“Scuzati dar asta e situatia/ Sorry but this is the situation”

The great idea!!!!

It was a day in the middle of June, after the end of the workshop we prepared about European Union pillars to promote European elections, when we decided to do a documentary about the situation of Roma minority in Craiova and in Romania.

We had this idea because Giuseppe and Afo, only two weeks before, managed to do a short documentary, based on some interviews, with the collaboration of the local television Tele U.

The result was great and we really enjoyed doing it (I wrote “we” but, I mean, I help them only in the final part).

Also since the first days in Romania we felt that there was something amazing in the Roma's way of life and we were interested to understand it.

So, at the earliest opportunity, during the weekly meeting with our project manager Luiza and the other volunteers, we exposed our idea to involve ourselves in this documentary project. We wrote, as first step, a plan to describe the explanation of our puposes, the structure, the methodology and the realization way we want to follow.



We change the initial plan – why?

Today, before writing this description, I read this document for the first time after more or less five months and I started to laugh, because, now I can easily say that we didn't follow the schedule and the actions planned. At the end we did something really different from what we have set at the beginning. But I would like to clarify that I'm really proud about the kernel of this document, because, the key idea we wrote concerning the explanation of our puposes, was for us a sort hidden and helpful guide (as Ariadne's thread) in all the developing parts of the project (preproduction, production and postproduction). Since the beginning we have decided to show what we would understand, during the next months, about the situation of the Roma community through the experiences lived as volunteers and through the words of some actors active in local and international Ong (for example: Trust and Romani Criss) or governmental programme (Sper).

Describing the continue Human Rights violations (the lack of quality in the educational system and in the sanitary service, the impossible entrance in the job market, the very bad condition of housing reality of all the communities around Romania, the racist and ignorant behaviour of some not Roma citizens) but also the positive change in action, were not an easy job to manage.

That's why the result: "Scusati dar asta e situatia/ Sorry but this is the situation" (only the title can suggest something about the contents and how we manage to do it) is a very personal documentary a little bit difficult to follow (and for someone also boring) because, I think the reason is in the way we did it: with our lack of experience and with our own style.



The structure is very simple, we divided it in three parts:

- -The first one is about a protest organized by Romani Criss against racism in Mercurea- Ciuc, the capital city in Harghita region.

Three weeks before it happened that some people belonging to an extremist local group burned some houses and chased away from their house 20 Roma families in the San Martin community.

The Romani Criss movement, an active association in Romania and in Europe, decided to demonstrate against this kind of racism behaviours with a demonstration in the streets of Mercurea-Ciuc. We were there with our cameras and we participated at the protest.



- -The second part narrates the summer camp in Timis de Sus (Brasov) for Romani children. This experience is sponsored and managed from an governmental campaign S.P.E.R. (Agentia Nationala pentru Romi). This summer camp is a unique opportunity for children to develop their self identification as a Roma citizens, to study Roma history and to know children from other part of the country with different experiences.

■ -The third part is about Craiova. The city where we lived for six months.

This city has a huge Roma community (30.000 inhabitants) and we tried to explain this local reality through the words of a person who works in the field human right protection (T.R.U.S.T association).



We filmed the daily life: the Romanesti market a place totally leads by the local Roma community and we were in Mufleni, a neighbourhood where the majority of the Roma families lives.

The motivation:

With this document we tried to explain what we understood about the situation of the Roma minority in Romania, we did with the tools that we found and we did it first of all for us: to remember which experiences we lived and with whom we share beautiful moment. It is also, even if it is difficult to follow, is a good instrument for everyone is interested to know a natural view about this reality.

Marco Marini, Giuseppe Abignente, Alfredo Fernandez Ojeda - the Three Musketeers that „have scared” EVS

Marco Salsi – Italy

For me this EVS means a lot of new activities. I tried something new and attractive.

Collaboration with Europe Direct



Together with Luisa Maniezzo, I wrote a brochure about the European policies for Environment. The aim of the brochure was to transform the bureaucratic language of European measures into a simple language, which everybody could understand. The brochure should have been spread among youngsters in the schools in the next year.

Writing articles, blog, reports.

I started to write a blog about my experience in Romania on the ARDR web platform and I also wrote an article about my experience in fundraising and in project writing during my EVS stage for a web magazine about European volunteering. Furthermore I wrote also narrative reports of our visit to Carcea for the Community Needs Analysis.

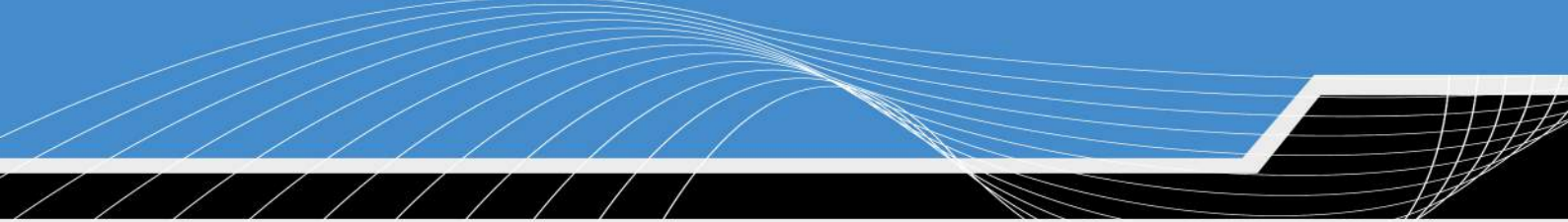
Writing a Project for Pilot Project Grants from Council of Europe.

Together with Luisa Maniezzo and Giuseppe Abignente, I wrote a project to ask for a grant of Council of Europe for a Pilot Project. Thanks to the collaboration of T.R.U.S.T., an NGO of Craiova dealing with Human Rights and Roma Community, we decided to ask for a grant to set an international workshop in Craiova among different NGOs dealing with Education and Roma children. The project has not been approved.


Writing an EVS Project to be implemented in the Hosting Community of Craiova.

Together with Luisa Maniezzo and Marco Marini, I wrote an EVS project for the NGO E.P.Y.D. to be implemented in Craiova in the next year. The aim of the project is to make the international volunteers face the problem of segregated schools for Roma children in Craiova. Thanks to the support of T.R.U.S.T., the volunteers will have the access to the Roma Communities of Craiova and to the segregated schools and they will plan and implement after-school activities (mainly sport ones) and a summer camp. The project has been approved and it will be implemented from January to August 2010 in Craiova from E.P.Y.D.





In order to support the A.R.D.R. policy of development among Dolj County, together with Luisa Maniezzo, Marco Marini and Lilit Avetisyan and lead by our Project Assistant Raluca Barbuleanu, we started the Community Needs Analysis of some villages of Dolj County: Malu Mare, Cârcea and Daneți. The aim of this work was to make the local institutions (City Council, Schools etc.) aware about the possibility to host international volunteers on their territory and to find out which are the priorities of these communities in order to make the volunteers work on a community development project. Furthermore we also collected information about the adaptability of the community for the hosting process of international volunteers (infrastructure, spaces etc.).



ABOUT ARDR

(Regional Association for Rural Development)

WHAT IS EVS?

„EVS – New opportunity”

WHAT IS EVS?

„A time only for me, to take stock of the situation,,

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP VIA EVS.

„Volunteers - a wonderful example of active citizenship”

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

Our team



All views and opinions expressed are the full responsibility of the authors and do not reflect the position of donors.

This project was co-financed by:



**EUROPEAN
PLATFORM
FOR *Youth*
DEVELOPMENT**