

## **EVS - Volunteering**

There are many advantages to taking on some student work during our university years. First of all it is a great way to finance expensive textbooks, leisure time or help out your family. However above all it will provide one with experience, which is the key to finding a good permanent workplace, if you make smart choices.

I was not only able to learn many useful skills during my employment with EU-Jobs Kft, but I also got the wonderful opportunity to take part in a very special programme. Between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> May, an international Symposium was held in Ljubljana. The title of the event was EVS Competences for Employability.

EVS, or European Volunteer Service, offers the unique chance for young adults up until the age of 30 to visit foreign countries, do some very exciting volunteer work, get to know new people and of course practice their foreign language knowledge - among others.

Unfortunately despite this wonderful chance, the number of unemployed young people is still quite high in the European Union. Part of the aim of the Symposium was to discuss how the EVS, which is part of Erasmus plus, can help people become more competent. As EVS is still not as commonly known as for instance the Erasmus programme, one of the first steps in helping young people is by spreading the word about the opportunity.

As for the people who have already had the chance to go abroad and experience new things, it is vital that they are able to verbalise what they have gained through it. This is not just a key point in case of applying for a new position, but also important for self evaluation. While talking to people working at sending- and hosting organizations I have discovered, that volunteers returning from their trips often do not know how useful the skills they have acquired are, as they often become every day routine for them. What's more it is often difficult for them to readjust to everyday life, as they have experienced eye opening and unique situations as well as events, that the people who have never broken their day-to-day routines have a hard time accepting and understanding.

As a result having a thorough session discussing these issues seems to be vital either at the end of the volunteering period, or soon after returning to one's home country.

Based on my experiences at the Symposium, as well as an international recruiter for EU-Jobs, I also have firsthand experience on how young people often find verbalising and highlighting their skills difficult. Because of this I hope that this kind of counselling will also be part of the EVS programme in the future.

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