



**Senior volunteering projects**  
**13<sup>TH</sup> September TO 3<sup>TH</sup> October 2014**  
**FINAL EVALUATION WITH VOLUNTEERS**

1: Please provide a brief description of the impact of the activities so far on the volunteers involved in the project. It is preferable that the description be written by a volunteer in their own words. This section may be used as a case study by the National Agency?

The activities have had a strong impact as they have given me an understanding of the culture of the Latvian people, their history, particularly since 1920s onwards and the huge impact of their history on the people now.

2: What was the best part of a selection process?

The informality of the main interview.

3: How did you find the training or the preparations for the visit?

We had language training and were given an understanding of the current day culture. Both of these two areas were immensely helpful and allowed me to settle into the country quickly. Our trainer worked hard to give us a basic understanding of the language and differences in the alphabet from our own.

4: What activity/activities did you like the best in Tukmus Latvia?

It is very difficult to answer this as I achieved satisfaction from everything that we did. However the work with the school and the museum were both at the top of the list. The work at the school, which I was new to, I found particularly challenging and rewarding as the children seemed to respond well to the work I did with them. The work of the museum gave me an insight into the tragedies experienced by some Latvians and how they are beginning to deal with it as a society.

5: How did you find the hospitality of Host organisation? i.e. very helpful/considerate?

The host organisation was very helpful and friendly. I felt that I was with friends and had their support if I needed it.

6: What was the accommodation like?

The accommodation was a flat in an area of blocks of flats. There were 2 bedrooms, a bathroom and a large living area including a dining area and modern kitchen. The flat was decorated to a high standard inside. The outside of the block was typical of all blocks of flats built originally in the Russian period and looked uninteresting, bland and poor in quality. There was no lock on the bathroom door or the bedrooms which I would have preferred.

7: Did you enjoy the Latvian food and culture? If so please explain what was interesting about their culture?

I enjoyed the Latvian food which included many pickled vegetables and preserved fruits and a wide selection of smoked meats. Their culture was fascinating and included all Latvians enjoying singing in large choirs, and a wide interest in handicrafts such as knitting and weaving to a high standard. They also had wide skills

working in wood producing items of furniture, toys and household items. Their care of people with learning difficulties and disabilities is expanding to include a wider number of people than when under the influence of the Russians.

In volunteering terni what was the best experience you had in TUKMUS that you would like to implement iii the UK?

The opportunity to talk with, listen to and begin to understand a people that have only recently emerged from the control of Russia. This was a rare opportunity and I learnt so much.