



Senior volunteering projects
24TH TO 11TH April 2014
FINAL EVALUATION WITH VOLUNTEERS

- 1: How did you find the host Organisation and the activities arranged by them?

The host organisation is very good and welcoming. Three visits to the Zante crisis centre were a bit too much as the only thing we were doing was to play with the children who seemed to like us but I would have liked to teach them songs in English and French and play games with them outside. Feeling useful is a big part of volunteering as far as I am concerned. One visit to the alternative school would have been enough. The children there asked lots of questions thus practising their english. I enjoyed the visits to Jaunmoku pils where we were treated like royalty.

Giving French lessons at Zinatne was a bonus as the ladies did enjoy them as much as I did. Teaching English at the centre was good and I felt useful. All the people were really nice and willing to make the most out of us. At the museum where we proof-read their brochures in French and English everybody was friendly and very grateful for our help.

The interview with the journalist was very enjoyable and hopefully useful for the centre.

I enjoyed the visit to the chocolate museum which was fun and informative.

The visits to two unexpected museums near the Zante crisis centre were interesting. It was good to see how enthusiastic ordinary people can be. Their passion and pride shone through. One was at the old fire station with an incredible amount of artefacts and an impressive collection of...accordeons. The other was exclusively dedicated to the wars in 1918 and 1945 in Latvia. It was extremely interesting and sad. There were about six or seven rooms full of Latvian, Russian, German, American and French items(arms, coins, uniforms, surgical instruments, personal belongings, flags, and much more) and in the garden, jeep, plane, lorry, tank.....

I don't know whether our meeting with the NGOs was useful to most of them but quite a few questions were asked. I think we were over prepared as we didn't know what to expect. An Internet connection would have been welcome as we had a few things to show.

- 2: Did you enjoy the Latvian culture and the food?

I haven't seen much of the culture but the food was good. The black bread is so good! Everything is tasty even the simplest dishes.

In Riga the museums were shut except the Tower one which was a pity.

3: What was the accommodation like, did it meet your needs?

The flat is very nice. We could have done with a couple of armchairs and a shower curtain and a hook for the shower. My bed was good but Valdis's was a bit rudimentary for three weeks. We didn't manage to work out the phone lent to us (that's old age for you!). It was fortunate that one of the UK volunteers dropped out due to illness. Three people sharing a two bedroom flat would have been very difficult

4: What you have seen or learnt at LTS MC "Zinātne", do you think you will implement any of it in your respective country?

As I volunteer with Mencap which deals with people with learning difficulties, it does not apply but if I were to teach as a volunteer abroad or foreigners in England it would give me a very useful insight into teaching a foreign language to people who do not share my languages.

5: In terms of your interpersonal skills how do you think this visit has helped you?

From a hermit in England I became an extrovert in Latvia. I have rediscovered that I can be funny and that I can relate to people in an easy way. Maybe I should keep it up here.

6: Would you recommend the Volunteering Exchange opportunities to your colleagues?
Yes

7: Any comments: which will help us to improve the future visits?

Possibly a more detailed time table and a list of what to see or do in the volunteers' freetime.