

## MY EVS



My name is Laura, I'm 29 years old and I'm from Spain. Many people who know me don't surprise when I told them I was going to Poland to participate in the European Voluntary Service. Since I can remember I like new experiences and now I can assure that my EVS in Poland has been one of the most complete experiences of my life.

Find a place in the European Voluntary Service is not easy, you have to look hard and read many projects. Write your CV and a good motivation letter. In my case for me was not important the country to travel I wanted to find a project in which to learn and in which I could help. So I was chosen to go to Poland to work in a school for children with intellectual disabilities.

I found in Poland a country full of people ready to help me in what I needed. Wonderful people. My project at school was amazing. We were three volunteers, we worked with children in different classes and was not important not speak the language, nonverbal communication became my specialty, and there was not one day that I felt I could not learn something new. The teachers took care of us and always tried to make life easier in Poland. In this project I learned, among other things, to be more professional, more organized, more patient, keep an open mind and never think "I can not." I laughed every day, I had millions of hugs and smiles, I was very happy with "my" kids.



Land to another country means confronted with new habits and behaviors that at first it lead to to live a kind of cultural sock, during which you try to adapt and understand. In Poland for example, the first thing I experienced was the challenge of "greeting" I pass from the two Spanish kisses to the cold handshake. Another amazing thing to me is the polish timetable, I still remember the first time they gave me lunch at 12 a.m I thought "*this is crazy, I will not be able*", but the first time you see sunset at 16 pm you will understand everything and believe me you get used to. Not to mention the customs like "*the fat day*" where thy eat many donuts. Or the day on *Easter Monday*, when you walk down the street and suddenly someone surprises you throwing yourself a bucket of water "*I was quietly walking down my street when a car from several boys threw us water*" we knew that it could happen, we had cautioned, but living it is much funnier. All these new things are part of the process of learning a new culture. Are surprising many times but you learn to see life from tolerance and respect and especially learn to be critical of your own culture and be more aware of who you are and how you are.

Deserve a special mention the topic of language "*my big challenge*". When I arrived I just was try, that it sounded to me, because with polish only works one thing, study, intuition does not work. The program covers the Polish course, it is very necessary, but from my experience it is necessary to put more interest, and try even though you in shame. I know I do not speak Polish, but I swear that when I finished the project I was able to understand that they were talking about. The English and

mime became my two favorite languages, although I admit that often speaks to the children in Spanish "*so much that they finally understood me*"

I invite anyone who is interested to participate. EVS is a unique experience that'll take forever in my memory and in which you can learn a lot and going to live wonderful experiences. Take the decision and look for your project, do your own EVS.