

## EVS Opportunity

### Stowarzyszenie Międzynarodowej i Międzykulturowej Wymiany ANAWOJ



**Hosting organization:** ANAWOJ Association

**Location:** Michalowo

**Topic:** non-formal education, youth leisure

**Number of hosting volunteers:** 2-4

#### How is the hosting organization like?

Association of International and Intercultural Exchange ANAWOJ is a non-governmental organization from north - eastern of Poland, from Podlasie region, working on local, regional and international level. They actively participate in the development of the region and promote the civil and social activity among inhabitants. They promote the intercultural exchange and dialog between different cultures and people from different cultural and social ground. The target groups are: mainly kids and youth, but also their parents, teachers, youth workers, youth leaders and also seniors.

ANAWOJ cooperates very closely with: local house of culture, local Kindergarden, Primary and Secondary School, Hospice Foundation of Oncology in our community and other public institutions in Michalowo like also with a lot of other institutions and NGO's from the region.

The main aims of those activities are: creation of conditions for the international understanding, rising the public and social involvement, dissemination of the idea of national and international voluntary service, promotion of the cultural diversity, active work in ecology and environmental protection sector, taking actions against unemployment and social exclusion. Furthermore, ANAWOJ wants to promote active leisure time and healthy lifestyle. The organization wants to contribute to the development of openness and tolerance among people of our community, especially the young and children, but also between different generations.

What motivates the organization regarding the work with international volunteers is that they can bring a "piece of Europe" to the rural region of Podlachia and that the volunteer can show possibilities, through own example, also present others that they can also help our organisation in work with the youth, kids and adults in our region. There are a lot of things that anyone can learn from other countries and EVS-volunteers always bring a lot of new ideas from their own cultures, show different ways of solving problems and acting and effectively help develop the projects and organisation.

### **How is the region like?**

The head office is located in Michalowo, a small town located near Bialystok in Podlachia region, in the northern-eastern part of Poland. The whole region is a part of so called Green Lungs of Poland - the territory with multitude of national and regional parks and nature reserves, great wilderness (the part of it is famous Bialowieza forest, for example), the largest swamps in the Central Europe.

Podlasie region is well-known not only for its marvelous environment but also for its multicultural and multi-religious character. One can find here Belorussian, Ukrainian and Lithuanian national minorities as well as the traces of Jewish culture. Bialystok (300 000 inhabitants) is the capital of this region. It is great administrative, academic and cultural centre. Michalowo is located about 38 km from Bialystok and 15 km from Belorussian border.

The 3000 inhabitants struggle with many problems. One of them is high unemployment and lack of perspectives. The big worry is also strong abuse of alcohol among young people. The association ANAWOJ is constantly trying to involve these young people in projects and to show them that live without alcohol is much better choice and gives a lot of different, interesting opportunities that can be created by their own involvement and creativity.

During free time, the volunteer can spend in Bialystok with other volunteers and local youth. Surroundings give the possibility for the volunteer to spend wonderful time outside, in the nature and in the national parks nearby. Volunteers can participate in all handicraft workshops organized by local culture centre and have the offer to visit for free the local swimming hall. The volunteer can reach Bialystok by bus, which is going each hour (around 50-60 minutes to Bialystok). Also, the volunteers will be provided with free bikes.

## **Volunteer's desired profile and the learning process:**

ANAWOJ is searching for someone who likes to work with youth, is active, independent, creative and wishes to realise his/hers own small projects and activities. The life condition in Michalowo will be simple (for instance wooden houses heated by stove), so the volunteer should be sure that he/ she want to live in those simple conditions. The offer accommodation is in a nice and quiet environment, near nature.

The volunteer will work hand in hand with ANAWOJ's staff; he/ she becomes team member and will be integrated into the work of managing committee. He/she is welcomed to find own place in the organization, gets the opportunity to learn Polish and to develop his/her own personality, different skills and abilities. Through assistance in different parts of our work the volunteer has opportunity to learn more about public relations, quality assurance, project management, financial management, heritage protection, networking and partnership building, knowledge's in the work with children and youth etc.

During the project, volunteers are expected to acquire in particular the following competencies:

- Ability to work in a team task and an international team
- Ability to flexibly during the ongoing task
- Experience working with children and young people (with fewer opportunities)
- Ability to activate and animate other
- Knowledge of the region, with particular emphasis on the environment, cultural and social
- Skills in project management, workshops, etc.

## **About the tasks:**

Main work fields:

- a) assistance in project management and office work
- b) support offers of active and outdoor activities for kids and youth as an "local animator"
- c) assistance in cooperation projects with local partner institutions (like house of culture, Kindergarden, Primary and Secondary School and/ Workshop of Occupational Therapy for disabled person of our community - provided by Hospice Foundation of Oncology)

The proposed tasks are the following:

- assisting in coordination of youth exchange projects and international workcamps
- assisting in organization, preparation and creating of different kinds of seminars, workshops and trainings on regional, national and international level
- assisting in development of new non-formal educational, creative and innovational projects
- assisting in office work (especial correspondence, public relations, updating of our homepage and local web-forum, edition of newsletter, creation of posters and information sheets and so on)
- assisting in working groups for heritage protections (renovation works on cemetery etc.)
- organization of outdoor activities for children (in summer camps, forrest activities or on playground)

- support in animation of local youth: to encourage children and young people from Michalowo to spend free time active and outdoors through active methods like games, playing ball, handicraft, joint trips to the forest, etc.
- Conducting workshops, arts and sports in the open air
- Assisting and conducting environmental activities for children in nature and forest
- Conducting "European workshop" in our local school and kindergarten
- Presentation "European Voluntary Service" on all local and regional events in the region
- organizing workshops in field of non-formal education for kids and youth in local educational institutions like kindergarten, primary and secondary school
- preparation, organization and conducting of "European workshops" in Occupational Therapy Centre for disabled person of our community
- assisting in preparation and organization of intergenerational workshops and meetings for youth and disabled person of Occupational Therapy Centre

On the beginning the volunteer has time to get to know everything and everyone connected with our projects, to recognize the community and to develop ideas for own activities. After the period of introduction the volunteer can decide which fields of activities he/she likes most and concentrate on it. He/ she can propose and make own ideas as projects. The staff will support the volunteers during all of the activities.

