



### **Volunteering in Poland: EVS in a special school**

**Hosting organization:** Special School Complex nr.16

**Project location:** Bialystok, Poland

**Project Topics:** Disabilities - special needs, Creativity and culture, Pedagogy and didactics

**Places available for volunteers:** 2

#### **1. Description of the hosting organization:**

The School Complex No. 16 in Bialystok trains and educates about 205 students aged 16-24 years old with intellectual disabilities. The institution provides services in the following departments: Vocational Special School (which trains the youth for becoming: a hairdresser, a cook, a car mechanic, a gardener, a hotel service worker, a carpenter) and Pre-Vocational Special School for students with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities and with other impairments. Their aim is to provide students to develop and prepare to deal with different social roles, to live independently and lead an active adult life.

After regular lessons, they offer additional lessons to develop interests and talents: sports activities (gym, aerobics, swimming pool), theatre (auditorium with stage), arts, IT classes, choir, sightseeing and tourism ; compensatory classes; specialty classes. They also organize for them carnival balls, tours, bonfires, cinema, theatre, meetings and social events and a variety of classes and workshops for parents and guardians of the students.

The school took part, amongst other international programs, in the Comenius program "Learning for life", coordinated by the Foundation for the Development of the Education System. Students

and teachers had the opportunity to work closely with partners from France, Portugal, Romania, Turkey and Italy.

**Main task of the volunteer:**

- supporting teachers in their daily work, in: preparing meals, sewing, cleaning work, washing, gardening, computer use, and commercial art techniques.

- supporting individual classes with the students (on different level of disability)

- supporting professional classes for students

- supporting in sports activities (gym, aerobics, swimming pool), theatre (auditorium with stage), arts, IT classes, choir, sightseeing and tourism ; compensatory classes; specialty classes.

- organizing and participating in school events: carnival balls, tours, bonfires, cinema, theatre, meetings and social events.



**Desired attributes of the volunteer:**

- the ability and desire to work with disabled people
- the volunteer enjoys helping others and is open to learn new activities and have new experiences and would like to work with different age groups
- the capacity of supporting the teachers in their everyday activities
- basic skills in speaking english
- the volunteer is a sociable person and it's open to always meet new people
- artistic skills would be helpful (arts and crafts, music etc.)
- he/she would like to enrich the Special School life with his/her knowledge and is eager to share the knowledge of his/her country/region –culture, tradition, customs
- the volunteer should be creative and energetic

The volunteer has the possibility of getting to know the Polish culture and tradition as well as learning the Polish language. Being in Bialystok the volunteer will have the opportunity of getting to know the city and surrounding tourist attraction. The volunteer has the possibility of understanding the methods of working with special needs children. He or she will be able to present their own culture and national tradition.

**About the city:**

Bialystok (≈ 300,000 inhabitants ) is a city located in the N-E of Poland, serving the function of the capital of Podlaskie province. It is the administrative, economic, and academic center of the region, which, due to its exceptional environmental assets, has been included into a special ecological area termed the Green Lungs of Poland. The location in the environmentally clean region, full of tourist attractions, as well as the rich infrastructure of

Białystok, makes the city and surrounding area a great place for living, recreation and development of tourism. It is a meeting place for Poles, Belorussians, Jews, Lithuanians, Germans, Russians and Tatars. The multiethnic of the city was the reason for the Białystok - born Ludwik Zamenhof to start his work on the universal language of Esperanto. The volunteer has the possibility of getting to know the Polish culture and tradition as well as learning the Polish language. Being in Białystok, the volunteer will have the opportunity of getting to know the city and surrounding tourist attraction. In their free time, all the volunteers from Białystok and the surroundings can meet and participate in one of the frequent cultural events, go out in a pub or take a walk in the woods surrounding the city or near a lake.

