



**Hosting organization:** The School Complex no. 11 in Bialystok

**City:** Bialystok

**Period:** usually from September/October to June

**Topic:** Education for people with disabilities, youth leisure

**Number of hosting volunteers:** 2

### **How is the hosting organization like?**

The Complex School nr.11 in Bialystok is a public educational special school for mentally handicapped at different levels: mild, moderate, severe and profound. There are 80 handicapped children in the school at the moment aged 7-25. The aim of the school is to prepare these mentally handicapped children to live and integrate with society and make the ability to be self-sufficient. The school is involved in many interesting projects, such as: sport projects (football, athletics etc.), cultural projects (theatre, painting, ceramics etc.). The structure of the School is the following: a) Primary School number 17 for mentally handicapped with mild, moderate and severe level; b) Junior High School number 24 for mentally handicapped with mild, moderate and severe level; c) Revalidation and Educational Group for mentally handicapped with profound level.

The school is eager to participate in many different types of actions related to environmental protection and is involved in educational meetings with interesting people. The school worked with volunteers from High Schools and Universities, who assisted teachers while working with children and led interesting events such as Valentine's Day or a Carnival.

The staff is open and friendly to people from the outside. They often host students in the school who learn the methods and forms of work needed in working with mentally disabled children. They will assist and will support volunteers in their work and beyond. They will share their knowledge and experience and will create a friendly, welcoming atmosphere.

The volunteers should take part in different events which are held in the school, the town and in Poland ex: music, theatre and art festivals, sports events, therapeutic activities. All the pupils and most of the teachers are involved with these events, so the volunteers will be able to help during those events.



### How's the area like?

Białystok (≈ 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 has become an example of the integration of ethnic and religious groups, a meeting place for Poles, Belorussians, Jews, Lithuanians, Germans, Russians and Tartars. 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.

### Main Tasks:

- work and plan their own schedule according to the student's needs and with any help of the Special School workers they only need; they have an opportunity to form their competence in cooperating with other organizations, which are the organization's partners in the local environment (schools, universities, music and theatrical groups etc).
- Support teachers in their daily work and childcare
- Co-organization of school events.
- Sharing knowledge about other countries - their customs, traditions and culture, cuisine
- Use your own passions and interests, special talents while working with disabled children
- Sport & artistic skills are not required, but very welcomed (can play some instrument, knows sport games, handcraft etc.)



The organization would like to host international volunteers, because they are sure that for the children it would be great possibility and chance to meet new people, from other countries, listen to foreign languages and learn about other traditions and habits of different nations. The volunteer has the possibility of understanding the methods of working with special needs children. Teachers not only teach children but also, in cooperation with tutors, try to help them in every situation. Volunteers are very helpful here as they usually have another, different way of living and points of view what they can present while living in the local community. In

different kinds of activities (for example during crafts, music, drama, physical education lesson etc.) volunteers can take their own initiative and act in their own way.

**The volunteer's profile:**

He/she should desire to help others, should be open to new activities, should want to try work with different age groups and with the mentally and physically handicapped. The volunteer should also have basic english skills and be a responsible, warm person, who doesn't have the problems with making new contacts.

