

EVS OPPORTUNITY: PRIMARY SCHOOL IN GRÓDEK

Hosting organization: The School from Gródek

City: Grodek

Period: usually from September/October to June

Topic: Education, youth leisure, sport

Number of hosting volunteers: 2

About the hosting organization and why they chose to have volunteers.

The School Complex consists of Primary School as well as Grammar School. The Complex is equipped with a gym, a new playground, a computer lab, a library and a reading room at the school. Three classrooms are equipped with the interactive whiteboards, the Art classroom and the Biology classroom have projectors with PC computers. The pupils learn English (in a newly-equipped language laboratory), Russian as obligatory languages and Belorussian as facultative language. The school has long – established traditions, the most significant being: The School Day, the festive traditions with the character of the regional traditions (also related with the Belarusian Minority), family meetings and family feasts.

The main aim of the school is also to offer education for everyone and for free. Most of afternoon activities have free entrance and are open for all who is interested. In the school there are additional "clubs" for non-formal educational activities, like for instance: volunteering club, the theatre group, the club for movies, different sport groups, language clubs and group of scouts. The school also cooperates very close with local institutions and NGOs from the village and surroundings: Within the project "high school academy of key competencies" school cooperated for example with a law company.



Besides, the school actively cooperates with the Forest District in field of outdoor and nature education and the local House of Culture.

The voluntary club and voluntary activities are essential for our school. Pupils who are also volunteers actively take part in the nationwide actions. They collect money for needy people, they take care of the animals from the shelter; additionally, they take care of disabled people and are active in many activities. The school sees immensely benefit through cooperation with EVS volunteers for their students, who - living in the village, on the eastern border of the EU have little contact with people of other cultures. Also for teachers the cooperation with EVS

volunteers is very important and gives them motivation for communication and new ideas of education.

How is the location like?

Gródek (≈5.800 inhabitants) is located in the North – East part of Poland, 36 kilometers away from Białystok, the biggest city from this area. The limit of the municipality runs along the river Svislach creating the Polish Eastern border with Belarus and at the same time the external border of the European Union. By the municipality runs the road E-65, connecting Białystok and Minsk through the border crossing at Bobrownikach.

The unique ecological placement is the fact that the whole area of the municipality is located in the so called Polish Green Lungs and the western in the Knyszyn Forest Landscape Park. Clean air and water, the abundance of different species of plants, birds and animals is unique in Europe, which creates excellent conditions for the development of tourism and recreation.

Various folk and music festivals take place annually in the Gródek Cultural Center, like the music festival called Basowiszcza (festival for independent Belarusian Rock-music) and there is a indoor swimming pool 8 kilometres far from Gródek.



The main tasks for volunteers will be:

1. Organize workshops, meetings and games about their countries, cultures and traditions.
2. Participation and support in different school clubs.
3. Organize activities and games for pupils during the breaks between lessons and in the "day-room".
4. Organising language workshops and providing "language cafe" in the school. The volunteer can also introduce new forms of language trainings, games, different kind of creative activities which helps pupils to open for communication in foreign language.
5. Support pupils in the learning process – in regular lessons during morning and in afternoon activities.
6. Support the teachers in the school feasts and local ceremonies.
7. Creation of own projects and own activities (depending on the interests of the volunteer - for instance in field of sport, music, theatre, multimedia, literature, languages etc.).

Furthermore the volunteers can participate in school projects and celebrations and they can also participate in additional groups, clubs and workshops in the afternoon.

Volunteer's benefits:

- Active learning of new language (polish) and new culture

- Project work
- Work with kids and youth
- Work in international team
- Development of their creativity and entrepreneurship
- Reflexion about self-development
- Development and response of new challenges (leading own workshops, creating own creative activities, but also how to deal with life in small community).

Profile of the volunteer:

The volunteer should take great pleasure in working with kids and youth (from 6 to 16 years), be creative and have initiative. It is important that the volunteer has his/her own ideas for activities and motivation to realise them independently. He/ she should be open to live in the rural and economically poor region without lot of comfort. The volunteer should have a high motivation for learning polish language, because not so many people in Gródek are speaking english.

