



INTERCULTURAL JOURNEYS

Welcome to our first magazine issue!

Here, we share what's happening now, what's coming up, and our exciting past activities. Our magazine embodies our values in action, highlighting our projects and work. Join us in making our work more visible and impactful.

Allianssi Youth exchanges promotes intercultural learning and global understanding by offering intercultural learning mobilities for young adults.

ALLIANSSI YOUTH EXCHANGES

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30 YEARS OF ALLIANSSI YOUTH EXCHANGES

In 2023, Allianssi Youth Exchanges is celebrating a significant milestone – we've been at it for three whole decades! Yes, that's right, 30 years have passed since we first embarked on this journey.

For 30 years, we've been helping young people explore the world through various programs like working in hotels, languages courses, volunteering, and gaining work experience. We've done this not only in Finland but also in different countries in Europe and around the globe.

MEET OUR TEAM:

During this time, we've assisted more than 20 000 young individuals in gaining a better understanding of different cultures and perspectives through our programs.

Our commitment remains strong as we continue to provide opportunities for young people to grow and connect in our increasingly globalized world. We look forward to many more years of inspiring and empowering the next generation.

At present, our primary focus is on a diverse range of programs that include volunteering opportunities, vocational education mobility initiatives, youth exchanges, and training programs.





I'm Veronika, from Ukraine. Would like to say that I'm also from Kyiv, but actually it's my 3rd month not being there at all 😊🙈, as I was lucky to get some experience with ESC projects in France and the Netherlands. I used to work as a logistician and live office life during the daytime but usually on weekends turned to obsessed volunteer and helped with rebuilding houses, which were destroyed due to russian invasion in Kyiv region and Ukraine in general. I m really excited about my long-term volunteering in Espoo Youth Center, as after each project I changed, as discovered new features of my personality and improved soft skills. I am open for new challenges, acquaintances and will try to like this windy, cold and dark country with awesome nature!

NEW VOLUNTEERS

I'm Roman, from Kyiv, Ukraine. I have already participated in several exchanges to Finland, Canada and the US, organized some stuff and generally tried to make the most of my life. This year, I've found out about an opportunity to take part in the life of the Ukrainian community in Finland and decided to finally settle in one place, becoming a volunteer at the Ukrainian Community Center in Helsinki! It's a significant opportunity to rediscover Finland for me, as well as to meet lots of new people from both Ukrainian and international communities. I sincerely feel like it will be one of the most memorable years of my life.



SUSTAINABLE PARTICIPATION

In early spring we launched a page on our website about sustainable participation. The page is meant to help young people considering international volunteering, however keeping in mind the environmental repercussions of travelling.

We strongly believe in the power of international volunteering. Seeing different countries can be eye-opening and increase our understanding of the world. Learning new things sometimes requires travelling and cooperation on the international level.

We hope that participants in various different programs will have the opportunity to learn new sustainable ways of working, as a part of their own volunteering project, internship or other international program.

On this website we wish to offer tips on both sustainable travel, and low-emission travel or other environmentally responsible choices as well as how volunteers can take the environment into account in your everyday life, at home and abroad.

You can enter our website by clicking [here](#) :



Sustainable participation

Climate change and the decline of biodiversity are some of the bigge...

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VOLUNTEERING TEAMS

During the summer months, we coordinated several ESC volunteering teams, mostly in Finland and two abroad in Georgia and Spain. Our teams were spread across Finland, from southern Salo to the northern Kuusamo. Their activities were diverse, ranging from organizing music festivals to assisting at Red Cross reception centers and helping in animal shelters. We want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible journeys and experiences of our ESC volunteering teams. Below we share snippets of their stories and the impact they've made on the communities they served.

AUKUSTI ROCK FESTIVAL



European Solidarity Corps volunteers all over Europe joined together for two weeks to help build a local Finnish festival called "Aukusti" in Jalasjärvi. Volunteers from Czech, France, Romania, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Poland, Ukraine, Italy, and Finland quickly bonded. Camp leaders ensured everyone understood their tasks which included building the festival area, worked on fabric coverings, info signs, posters, artist support and cooking meals from various countries creating lasting memories of Aukusti.

ANIMAL RESCUE HOME



Just before midsummer, 10 ESC volunteers arrived in Finland for the volunteering team "Animal Rescue Home". Volunteers then celebrated midsummer learning about the Finnish traditions. After Midsummer the work in the animal rescue home started in full swing. Participants did different tasks such as cooking Finnish meals, caring for animals, and renovating barn.

DIVERSITY TO COMMUNITY

In Kuusamo, Finland, "Diversity to Community" is more than a project name; it's a way of life. Volunteers from nine countries, part of an ESC volunteering team organized by Allianssi Youth Exchanges and the local Red Cross, have embraced this international city, known for its welcome to refugees and asylum seekers. Activities involve engaging with locals and internationals, visiting schools, participating in events, and fostering unity despite our differences.



VOLUNTEERING TEAM IN GEORGIA

Our group of European Solidarity Corps volunteers spent June in Rustavi, Georgia near the capital, Tbilisi.

The volunteer team's program included designing and conducting activities for children and youth. Planning each activity took a day, and the following day, they put the plan into action. Each day's activities had different themes, aimed at teaching children and youth something important. Themes included wellbeing and health, environment, and body positivity!



MORE ABOUT ESC TEAMS

To discover more about our volunteering teams and gain insight into the experiences and lessons learned by our dedicated volunteers, we invite you to visit our website at **nuorisovaihto.fi**.

On our English-language page, you'll find information about exciting journeys, impactful projects, and enriching experiences shared by our volunteers. Have a look into diverse projects and valuable lessons learned during their time in service and get a deeper understanding of the positive impact they have made in various communities.

KEY ACTION 2 COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

Soup sharing



Allianssi Youth Exchanges is part of the KA2 strategic partnership called “SOUP SHARING” with the objective of implementing SOUP events in different communities around Europe and to raise civic engagement. Through this project, we developed International SOUP, which takes place in Helsinki. International SOUP was developed in order to facilitate communication between the citizens of Helsinki and create an open space where dialogue and exchanging of opinions is encouraged.

All Aboard Inclusive Train (AAIT)

All Aboard Inclusive Train (AAIT) is an Erasmus+ KA2 development project. The objective of supporting group leaders' skills in dealing with diversity at volunteer camps. The purpose of the project is to develop methods that support group leaders, specifically, 4 detailed workshops that trainers can easily integrate into existing seminar concepts for new camp leaders or that can be implemented as a separate training for camp leaders.

KEY ACTION 2 COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

C.L.I.C



Coordinating Locally to Initiate More Changes (C.L.I.C) with the European Solidarity Corps is a Key Action 2 Cooperation Partnership project, including 10 partner organisations, under the ERASMUS+ Programme. The main purpose of the project is to coordinate organisations at the local and regional levels to develop and disseminate methods and tools increase support methods for volunteers.

Hotspots

The project aims to develop non formal education tools and methods, within a newly designed pedagogical approach, to enhance intercultural learning among young people, both online and offline, in national and transnational Youth Participation Activities, within the E+ program.



PAST ACTIVITIES

MEXICAN TEACHERS

Allianssi Youth Exchange hosted a delegation of Mexican educators from the state of Guanajuato, who visited Finland to gain insights into the Finnish education system and youth work. The visit is part of the EDUCAM project, an acronym for "Educadores de Clase Mundial" or "World Class Educators." These teachers aim to promote global education, foster the development of competencies and values in students, and support international exchanges. 📖

During their stay, the teachers visited various educational institutions, including universities and high schools, to observe the differences between the Mexican and Finnish educational system. Additionally, they explored several points of interest, such as the Heureka Science Center and Suomenlinna Fortress Island. 🌞

SUOMENLINNA WORKCAMP



Allianssi Youth Exchanges is a member of the Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations and cooperates with the network members and partners around the globe.

Allianssi Youth Exchanges coordinate an international World Heritage Volunteering camp in Suomenlinna! Suomenlinna is a historic sea fortress and UNESCO World Heritage site located on a group of islands in the Gulf of Finland, near Helsinki. 13 volunteers from 7 different countries worked mostly at renovation, but also prepared wooden boat sailing race, did a visitor survey and removed some invasive plants.



YOUTH EXCHANGES

SUSTAINABLE BREAK



Participants went to a French village called Beaumotte with a group of 19 people. There were participants from Finland, Greece, Spain, Mexico, Ecuador, and Germany. The location was near the Swiss border, making it a bit challenging to reach due to limited transportation options. Everyone arrived safely, and the ecological exchange program began with the aim of promoting a more communal and environmentally friendly lifestyle. Despite initial limitations, the participants successfully learned about each other's cultures. During their free time, the participants engaged in card games, volleyball, and cultural exchanges. They created art, including Moomin figures, with a memorable Greek friend's self-portrait as a Moomin character in their end-of-camp envelopes.

SEEDS OF ART

Participants spent three weeks in the French village of Cause de Clerans on a youth exchange with participants from various countries. The theme was creativity, and they learned new skills through workshops, including handcrafting bracelets, making Italian pasta, basic Chinese language pronunciation, and meditative collage-making. Participants embraced a wilderness atmosphere, staying in tents and using outdoor facilities. Despite the challenges, the camp was functional and clean, creating a unique mood for activities. The exchange allowed them to share knowledge, make friends, and learn about European cultures.

LEAVE THE ROAD, TAKE THE TRAILS



The climatechange themed youth exchange, "Leave the Road, Take the Trails," took place in the French village of Le Creneau. Participants faced challenging conditions while living in tents and exploring the countryside for two weeks. Activities revolved around climate-related discussions and personal projects. One group researched climate policies and presented their findings, while another group campaigned to improve local transport, receiving strong local support. Participants explored nearby areas, bonded through group activities, and enjoyed leisure activities like bike trips and game nights, forming deep connections.

International youth exchanges promote empathy and a broader perspective beyond nationality, emphasizing human connections. These experiences boost participants' enthusiasm for similar projects and their faith in international opportunities.

COTTAGE OF CULTURES

Our volunteers project, "Cottage of Cultures," received Solidarity project financial support from European Solidarity Corps! Our volunteers identified a critical need to promote cultural exchange and integration between foreigners and Finnish people. Internationals need to feel more as a part of the community and more connected to locals. The idea of the project is to promote diversity, tolerance, and interculturality, to include minorities in community life and to make the distance between locals and internationals shorter.

So far, we've organized six successful events, each featuring a different country's culture like Italy, Poland, Ukraine, Greece, the Czech Republic and Vietnam.

Our event schedule typically unfolds as follows: We start with a lively presentation about the country, giving participants a taste of its culture through the eyes of a native speaker. Then, we offer a variety of workshops, from cooking to dancing to language lessons, so you can experience different aspects of the culture. We also have discussions about important topics like sustainability, religion, minorities, and LGBTQ+ issues to help participants understand the country better. To wrap it up, we have a fun social session with tasty traditional food and a chance to socialize and network.

To learn more and stay updated, visit our English page at nuorisovaihto.fi and check out the "Cottage of Cultures" section.



Targeted Mobility Scheme (TMS)



Allianssi Youth Exchanges is a partner in EURES network and a member in an European project called Targeted Mobility Scheme (TMS)

TMS is developed by the European Commission to reduce youth unemployment in Europe. The programme assists young people to gain valuable work experience in another European Union member state. It also enhances life skills through non-formal learning taking place when residing in a new country.

Target groups are jobseekers aged 18+ and employers from an EU country, Norway or Iceland. TMS supports jobs and work-based traineeships.

Ready for Life



Allianssi Youth Exchanges runs outgoing Erasmus + VET projects for vocational education. In these programs we work vocational students and recent graduates to provide them with tailored work experience during their studies or after graduation. At the moment we co-operate with several European countries and some non-European countries in these outbound programs. We offer work experience placements for vocational graduates from all fields and on the job learning placements during studies for students of youth and community instruction.

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the European Union



Thanks for reading our very first newsletter compiled by our skillful ESC volunteer Estera Kowalczyk. Please contact us if you wish to get any further info :

www.nuorisovaihto.fi



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