

SHOW ME YOUR GAME

Sign for Media:
Journalism Volunteering
Program for European
Deaf Badminton
Championships



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Erasmus+

This brochure is a product of a great Large Scale Voluntary service project that happened in Slovakia (3 July – 1 August 2018) during the 8th European Badminton Championship and 1st Deaf Youth Badminton Championship.

Special thanks go to the wonderful team of 31 young enthusiastic people from 8 countries and our local partner, Deaflympic Committee of Slovakia.

Introduction

The important role of volunteering in the sport was already highlighted by the EU in the Nice Declaration (2000) calling Member States to “encourage voluntary services in sport by means of measures providing appropriate protection for and acknowledging the economic and social role of volunteers, with the support, where necessary, of the Community”. The priority of it remains, as a sport can be also seen being a tool for the inclusion of people of different ages, backgrounds or disabilities.



We decided to bring 31 volunteers from all over Europe and neighbouring countries to the 8th European Deaf Badminton Championships 2018 and the 1st European Youth Deaf Badminton Championship 2018.

With this publication we kindly invite you to take a closer look to the Sign for Media project that through the great job of the volunteers helped to promote the inclusion of young deaf sportsmen and sportswomen due to the media coverage of the Badminton Championships 2018 hosted in Trenčín, Slovakia (3 July - 1 August 2018).

Here are some of the outcomes! Enjoy the reading.



WHAT IT WAS ALL ABOUT?



7 Things You Need To Know About The Project

#SignForMedia

#1. It's an Erasmus+ Volunteering Project

Perhaps you have heard about Erasmus+ before but don't have a clear information about it. Let's think of Erasmus+ as a huge umbrella with different parts; these parts would include training courses, youth exchanges, study mobility etc. and EVS is also just one of them. You probably came across with the word 'EVS' but had no idea what it is. EVS, or, European Voluntary Service is an international volunteer program funded by the European Commission. It allows young people between 18-30 ages to carry out an international volunteer service abroad ranging from 2 to 12 months. The good thing is that Erasmus + covers complete coverage of the program, so all you need is to apply is motivation!

" By volunteering, I want to give something back to Europe, because Europe gives strong support for us, but also I feel like giving something back because I was quite privileged in my society and I want other people to feel such support and kindness."
(Sophie Felicitas, Germany)



MORE ABOUT ERASMUS+

http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en

#2.31 volunteers from 8 different countries are part of the project!

Thirty-one participants from eight different countries, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Turkey who are interested in photography, video editing, writing, interviewing and social media are participating in this project. The goal is to promote the inclusion of young disabled people.



#3. 'Sign For Media' aims to raise awareness of young disabled people.

People with disabilities, especially the youth are most of the time excluded from our society, even though they might have a range of different skills regardless of their disabilities. Here we show disabilities especially in sports in order to make their talents be more known and visible.



"It's really interesting to be in the same environment with different cultures, you learn a lot from them' says Monika Tehrani" a journalist volunteer from Bulgaria.

#4. The project is not limited to one place!

Most of the time EVS projects are happening in specific countries and cities; Sign For Media, allowed young people to explore the culture of Bratislava, Slovakia in the first two weeks and also gain professional education related to journalism, while the last two weeks participants spent their time in Trenčín and put their experience and knowledge gained in Bratislava into practice.



#5. #SignForMedia provided professional trainings.

The project ensured that all participants gain enough professional experience in as video editing, photography, social media, writing, conducting interviews etc, before being able to work as volunteers. Professional trainings and workshops supported by the Deaflympic Committee and professional journalists and trainers were provided to the volunteers.



"Volunteering abroad is a great opportunity that all young people should experience and take most of it." (Olivera Stojkova, Macedonia)

#6. The name #SignForMedia has a double meaning.

Ivana Petriskova, the main project coordinator says: 'As for the name 'Sign for Media', sign is taken from sign language and the rest is connected to media coverage and awareness of these kinds of, very often, excluded communities of people.'



#7. Free Slovak Language courses and Sign Language were included.

People with disabilities, especially the youth are most of the time excluded from our society, even though they might have a range of different skills regardless of their disabilities. Here we show disabilities especially in sports in order to make their talents be more known and visible.



" I want to be a volunteer abroad because I want to show the world that not every black person is coming from the ghetto. Black people can also support others, not just receive help." (Anuli Anochirionye, UK)

WHAT IS VOLUNTEERING ?



What do young people think about volunteering abroad?

We summarized the replies from our volunteers in this project in several categories according to their answers:

1. Meeting new friends.

Most of the interviewed young people shared that meeting new people from different countries is one of their main reason of being active volunteers abroad. Erasmus+ provides this kind of opportunities to them and the chance to gather together with other people from different backgrounds and cultures.

2. Gaining new experiences.

Volunteering abroad is a great way to enhance your knowledge and to learn and develop new skills. It also teaches young people to work in a team and to produce a final result based on the group's efforts. Volunteering provides opportunities to learn other languages, to deepen your already developed interests, or to find what you are interested in.

3. Become independent. Through volunteering young people learn how to depend on themselves, to escape from their comfort zones and to see what are their possibilities. Also, they learn to be more responsible and it is a great way to become more disciplined.

4. Active citizens. Volunteering abroad broadens young people mindsets and makes them more socially active. After participating in volunteer work, the youth is more prone to develop their interest in becoming active citizens, to change or support the situation in their societies.

5. Become more open-minded.

Being open for experiencing new cultures and be tolerant towards all the differences. Volunteering abroad is a great tool that breaks the stereotypes and allows people to understand and learn from each other.

Volunteering abroad is a great opportunity that all young people should experience and take most of it. If you have already been a volunteer, share your thoughts so more people can learn and become involved in these projects.

Erasmus+

Author: Monika Tehrani

Interviewers: Olivera Stojkova and Monika Tehrani

INTERVIEWS WITH THE MEMBERS OF DEAFLYMPICS COMMITTEE OF SLOVAKIA



There's No Physical Difference In Sports

His name is Dušan Dědeček. He enters the room with a young woman by his side, Ivana Krištofovičová. By using the sign language, he introduces himself and says – ‘Hi. My name is Dušan. I’m 56 years old. I will be using the Slovak version of sign language’ – He explains, constantly using hands articulations.

‘I used to work at a nightclub as a DJ, but this job wasn’t really fulfilling. And even though, I was earning a lot of money I didn’t see any perspective in it. I wanted to support youth to come to some level. Nobody gives them chance, even though deaf people can be as capable in physical sports, as hearing people. So, when I was 26 years old I started to work as a coach. My passion for the sport was the main motivation for

‘In a period of three years, I started to coach girls that were preparing for the championship. It was the period of time when I had to work very hard in order to raise awareness about sports participating of people with hearing disabilities. After that, there were certain circumstances that changed my path and I started to train badminton for youth with hearing disabilities. So, my career as a coach of people with hearing disabilities began in 90’s’.

‘-There were different times then. It was very hard to succeed. I was working with these people [disabled] until 2001.’

‘Since the moment I started to work as the coach he has been working with many different groups. There were just certain difficulties, which forced me to finish. Therefore meanwhile, along the way began to work with deaf people. Systematically I became a coach of Ivana.’

-That’s where the girl who was sitting along his side for all this time gets introduced. She’s a championship winner of a sport called Shot Put.

‘In 2011 there was a need to organise and find other members, which was necessary to get a financial support from the state for the championship. The required from us results came through, because of very constant training and hard work and also because Ivana is a sports girl’. – He laughs. – ‘She was doing her best to reach the needed results. When we started in 2011 there was no support from the state. A year after that we got 3000 euro and then a year after that I had to pay 10.000 euros from my own packet, which I eventually got back, but still....’

'-So, in order to make this whole thing happen Dušan had to invest his own money, but at the end of the day it paid off. 'Last year we got 500 000 euros from the state. There still isn't much of a support from the state for the championship like that.

If I had to say something in the way that I work with deaf people, it would be very simple. I don't care about the disabilities, it doesn't matter. It's a physical sport and they are no worse than people with no hearing disabilities.' (He takes a big pride of his young trainees.) 'And all the hard times in getting things arranged was paying off to me in a way that all of us were really close to each other'. (He smiles).

In 30 years of my career as a coach, in 2004 I have managed to prepare a sportsman who was in Paralympics in Athens. He managed to win a bronze medal in a wheelchair. I consider it as the most valuable lesson and inspiration for her [Ivana]. In 2013 she won for the first time. She also holds the world record in this discipline.'

-What about the training? How does it differ from people without hearing disabilities? We asked.

'It is harder for them to understand the comments sometimes. Also, when something is hurting them sometimes, it's very hard for them to explain where, what and how does it hurt for example. Communication, in general, is much harder. For example, when it's time to start you clap for people with no hearing disabilities and they know it's time to start, and unfortunately, it's just not possible for deaf people. We have to sign. Some expressions they understand in a different way... Sometimes they are too shy to ask or say they didn't understand the command. They simply don't know how to express themselves. While training with Ivana it actually took three years for us to perfectly understand each other.'

He starts to wrap up the whole meeting by saying:

'Despite all the difficulties that we have to face, we are in it to win it.' – He laughs. – 'See you guys at Trenčín'. He smiles to everyone once again and then they leave the room. The official badminton championship begins 22nd of July in Trencin in Slovakia.

Our life is not only about sign language.

Peter Birka, a 64 years old deaf athlete told about the benefits of the project, young participants, happiness and his dream.

How do you feel about this project?

I am sure that it is very interesting. Not only for the deaf but for all sportsmen. So many young people collaborated in this EVS project and got in touch with the deaf community. It is very difficult to make interviews with sportsmen with hearing disabilities. Personally, I'm very impressed that young people from different countries had short 3-days course sign-language and tried to learn as much as its possible. All this work will be very useful for the deaf community, it will also help to raise awareness about our community. It could also be very useful for your people to have sign language skills.

Will you take a part in this championship?

Of course, I will take part in competitions. I am responsible for the European championship here in Slovakia, so I must be there.

What was the hardest situation you faced as a deaf person?

Thanks to the fact that I used to be able to hear until 4 years old, it was such a difficult situation in my life because as a child I didn't understand what happened. I immediately lost it within one day. Many years later I found that I can be successful even as a person with hearing disabilities. I have a good education, I was good at sports. Deaf people can do it all. I don't feel I have faced any unusual difficult situation. Of course, sometimes I see that some things are obviously more difficult for me than for the others, but I see adventures in it, I see benefits. Our life is not only about sign language, it is also about happiness, quality of relationships and family.

What is your biggest dream?

My biggest dream is connected to my work. I work as a teacher with children with disabilities, which is very challenging. I started 20 years ago, I was working with children, was teaching them to read. Now they are parents and some of them also have deaf children. I see that all I had taught them was applied with their children. They are really satisfied, they would like me to teach children many different subjects. For me, it's a challenge that I would love to accept. Now I teach a small class - only 5 children. I dream that my research will be useful for the deaf community.

Author: Elena Kurshuk

STORIES OF THE
BADMINTON
CHAMPIONSHIPS 2018
IN SLOVAKIA



Badminton Is Not Only About Medals

Dmitry Sobolev is the badminton coach from the Russian Federation.

He speaks about the main goals of the badminton game, why special separate games are needed and why cosmonauts are forced to play badminton.

Tell us about yourself, how did you become a coach?

I was born in a family with deaf parents; therefore, I have learned the sign language from birth. You know, these children like me are very surprised when they see that people use their mouths for communication. What? You speak with your mouth!? This is inconvenient; it is more convenient to communicate with signs!

In addition, in badminton, I involved myself accidentally. I started to play football, but I saw on the field next to me, people play badminton. I felt immersed and couldn't look away. This game is stunning and beautiful! The smoothness of movements, sharp jumps, twines.. Badminton. It's used also in training cosmonauts! Because everything develops simultaneously: coordination of movements, this is a very strong burden on the body. When you play badminton, sometimes you feel like in weightlessness

What is the special feature of training deaf children?

The deaf sports have not been studied at all. There is no books nor teachers. We try to find and learn things for ourselves. I often hear that people say: "If these children have arms and legs, let them play in regular championships, why to create separate ones for the deaf?". This is absolute nonsense. The absence of hearing affects the whole body: it is a completely different speed of movement, different coordination, everything is different!

What is the main goal of your work?

Of course, it is not only about medals or sports achievements. For coaches, the main thing is to help the deaf guys adapt to normal life. To help them to believe in themselves. The world of the deaf is very closed, deaf children often spend their entire lives among people like them. To come to these competitions, many children left their hometown for the first time in their life. For them, it is an adventure!

From Badminton Championships Winner to the Technical Director

His name is Martin Bogard and he comes from England. He used to play Badminton when he was younger, winning four gold medals, and one silver.

These days, Martin is responsible for the whole tournament. He is the person who has to provide all the necessary safety inspections, which includes making sure that every court is safe to play for every single player. He also has to organise the details with the city government. He is also arranging hotels for the staff, coaches and players. His job also requires running through all the important checklists.

As a player, his first championship was in 1990, and he kept playing until 2006. He said that he was always passionate about badminton and that was why he was playing this game, other than anything else. In 2002 in Switzerland he won the golden medal.

'I didn't expect it at all'. – Throughout the whole interview, he remained very modest and didn't want to share his accolades until he was directly asked for it – 'After winning the tournament I thought it was over for me, professionally. Because of my troubles with a back pain, I had actually quit playing badminton for a year. However, after that, I felt athletic hunger to beat my own record and therefore I kept playing for another few years before stepping away definitely'.

He was one of the people who helped setting up the first youth badminton championship – ***'The reason why I have decided to set up the first youth deaf badminton championship is that it was my dream to teach youth and give them the experience at the same time. I would really love to include them. Besides these championships, youth is also allowed to participate in a competition for adults, but the strength between adults and teenagers can be really incomparable, which is I wanted to give them whole other chance.'*** – Presumably because of his own struggles, he really wanted to give young people a chance that he never got when he was younger.

Even with no capability to hear other people, Martin is a very positive and funny person. He has been smiling through the whole time of the interview. He is hoping that the first deaf youth championship will be successful and will give whole new perspective to these young athletes.

Fighter, Dreamer and Music lover

Xavier Valledor from the French team. He is just 20 years old and he is already the Champion of French deaf badminton championship. He started playing when he was only 3 years old.

Xavier explains. *"My sister was participating at the badminton training, I just took the racket to my hand and said to my mom, I like this!, ever since that day, I have been playing the badminton. It's been 17 years since then. "*

He is still as passionate about the game as he used to be. At the age of 14, he had medical issues, which didn't stop until he was 16, but even that didn't stop him from playing.

Xavier was born in France in the city of Caen. His father is Spanish, and his mother is French, they both are psychologists. He said that thanks to the profession of his parents he has great observing skills. Hobby wise, he's a big fan of music, especially rap. He enjoys the lyrics of this type of music.

You are probably asking yourself how deaf people can like music since they can't hear it as we do. The answer is that they can feel the vibration, which they really appreciate. However, that is not the case for Xavier.

Currently, he's still able to hear the music because he's not completely deaf. He has a very hard hearing impairment condition, which only allows him to hear less than 40 degrees acute. He is touched by a generation disease of the Cochlea, as his mother and grandmother were before. He is going to be completely deaf when he will reach 40 years old.

Xavier also shared with us a bit more on a personal level. It's a very tough year for him. He lost a very close family member. He felt very sad and wanted to just separate himself from everyone. Despite being in a very difficult situation he is trying to focus on the positive things in his life.

"I love helping other people, that's why I volunteer in "Les restos du coeur", which is a French association for homeless people. I have met a lot of people and this human contact is something that I am always looking for and cherish every moment," he adds

His future ambition is to become a male nurse, because of the ability to constantly help other people. He defines himself as a very passionate person and with the life motto: ***'Enjoy your life as much as you can'.***

You can become anyone, If you really want it!

The inspiring story of young deaf photographer Adam Kováč proves that every dream can come true if you really want this. He conquered every obstacle he had to meet in order to become a well-known photographer.

Why did you choose to become a photographer?

First of all, I'd like to say that I have an older brother who is also deaf. He became a photographer and was my role model. Because of him, I became a photographer too and I started to be really interested in photography, as well as seeing the fun in it. It's been nine years already that I do photography.

The best picture you have ever taken? The most memorable, career-defining moment?

I think my best picture is from Austria. I sent that picture to the competition and I have won photo lab competition price, where my picture was competing against 94000 of other pictures. I have gotten the first place in one of the six categories. My reward was the first place in the landscape category.

Any advice for the young, upcoming photographers?

I see that kids nowadays are quite interested in taking pictures. They always have these phone cameras in their pockets, always taking pictures. So, I would say practice, practice and practice. That way the technical aspects of photography will eventually come to you and will be easier to learn when you have a lot of experience.

The toughest challenge you ever had to face as a deaf person?

Communication. Sometimes also the distance that I feel from people... That's because they don't know how to communicate with me.

Do you have any life motto or quotation you live by?

I don't know if it's valid, but I have a motto or saying, which kinds of defines me and it's "My silent lens around the world", but I'm not sure if it makes sense as a motto. On my website there is this motto somewhere, and also some pictures that I would love to show you. For example, the ones from the competition. (Please visit <https://www.adamkovac.com> for more information).

Interviewer/ Author: Arek Ciechacki

BLACK AND WHITE
WORLD?!





What languages do you speak?
I sign!

Do you judge me?
No I don't...
Do THEY judge?
Yes, they might...
Do you know what?
The exclusion is just a state of mind!





Do you see me?
I am here
Just in the middle of your heart
Sharing the smiles around
Having some fun
Do you see who the people are
happy having me in the middle?

Yes, it is me... the one you have
been looking for...while having it
all the time
your JOY of LIFE!

Message can be expressed in
different manners.
If you say it, sing, it, sign it it does
not matter....

I will try to understand you.





THANK YOU!

31 international volunteers

8 Mladiinfo team members

Artur
Anastasiia
Mykhailo
Inna
Nefise
Stefani
Olivera
Predrag
Elena
Sergey
Maria
Irina
Anna
Baptiste
Myriam
Fatima
Marie
Sinem
Nilay
Selinay
Burak
Ralitsa
Velislav
Elisa
David
Paula
Sophie
Anuli
Arkadiusz
Petrana
Monika

Ivana
Dajana
Petra
Martina
Monika
Marilena
Pablo
Ozgur

10 + Trainers

Peter
Pavel
Peter
Radoslav
Marek
Michal
Lucia
Dominika
Tomáš
Mário

2 cities

Bratislava and Trenčín

30 days

3 JULY - 1 AUGUST 2018





MORE FROM THE CHAMPIONSHIPS:

www.badminton2018.eu/en/mladi-info/

FOR VIDEOS:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/MladiinfoSlovensko/videos>

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