



Erasmus+



EUROPEAN  
SOLIDARITY  
CORPS

# AJ INTER JOURNAL

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*From Jerez with Love:*

*Volunteers, Voice and Vision*

- FAREWELL TO ESC  
VOLUNTEERS DJAYSON,  
PANNA & FRANCESCO

- YOUTH PARTICIPATION  
ACTIVITY: VOICES FOR  
EUROPE PROJECT

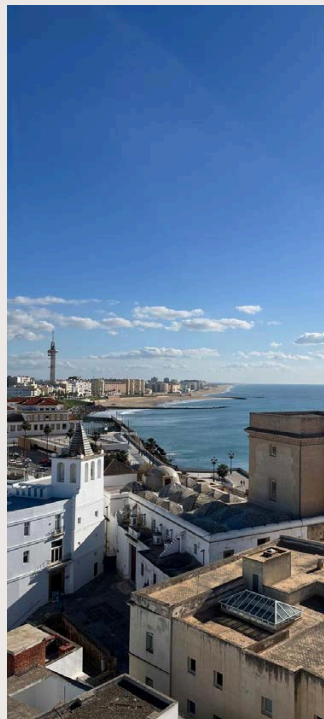




# GOODBYE ARTICLE DJAYSON



After 6 months as a volunteer for AJ Inter, it's time for me to go back to France and say goodbye... My adventure was filled with exchanges, commitments, discoveries and encounters! I am sad to say that this is the end of an AMAZING adventure.



I absolutely wanted to live this experience to take a break in my daily life in France but also to enrich myself personally. When I arrived in Jerez, my goals were meet new international friends, discover Spanish and Andalusian culture, strengthen my language skills and develop my digital skills.

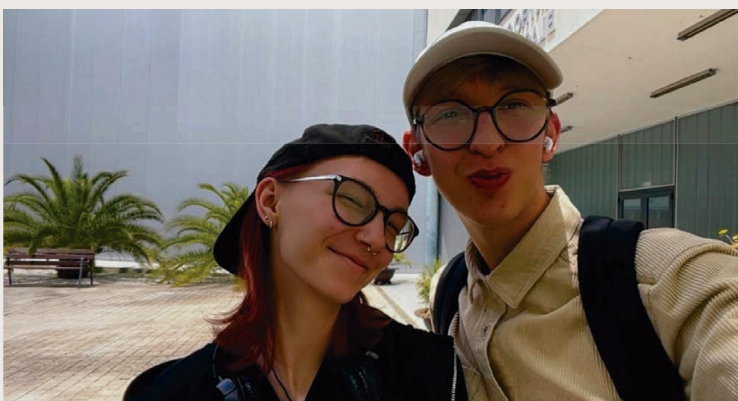
During my volunteering, I was able to achieve all my goals and surprise myself in various situations, for this, I had the chance to carry out various activities and participate in different projects.

At first, I was a little disoriented because I was not used but I was really surprised by the good weather conditions for a month of December because yes I arrived at the beginning of "winter". Nevertheless, I quickly took my marks because I love Spain so I acclimatized quickly and I was very fast at home.



A striking and funny anecdote during my debuts here in Jerez when I went to a school for my first activity, I saw all the students no matter their age, during the break of 11h ate sandwiches with ham or other salty products, I was shocked.

During these six months of volunteering, I had the opportunity to participate in many projects, workshops and events, as varied as enriching. In particular, I hosted a conversation club in French. Preparing and animating this club and the various activities as well as the different projects was a real challenge, but also a pride: it allowed me to get out of my comfort zone and express myself in front of an international audience. I have also helped two local associations. Through these experiences, I not only strengthened my communication, animation and project management skills, but also learned to work better as a team in an environment where languages, cultures and ideas are constantly crossing. My level of Spanish has improved a lot, and I have also gained confidence and adaptability.



Beyond the activities, it was the people I met who really marked my experience. I had the chance to share my daily life with other volunteers from various countries, with whom I have forged strong ties. Our differences quickly became a wealth: with Francesco and Giorgia, we exchanged a lot about our respective cultures, while Panna often made me laugh in the most difficult moments. The coordinators, always benevolent, were able to create a framework where everyone could express themselves and find their place. Shared parties, impromptu meals, long discussions or laughter around an activity will forever be etched in my memory. This atmosphere of solidarity, respect and listening has deeply touched me and strengthened my faith in the strength of the collective and human commitment.

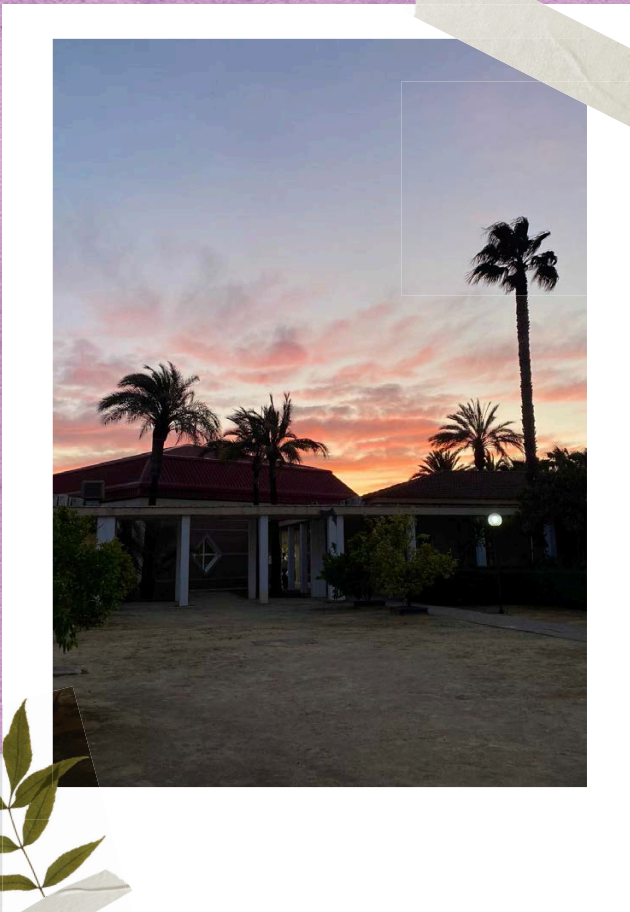
This volunteer work has transformed me profoundly, far beyond what I had initially imagined. I am leaving richer in human terms, with a greater openness of mind, a better knowledge of myself and an immense gratitude for all that I have experienced. I learned to adapt, listen, cooperate with people very different from me, and appreciate the beauty of diversity. I keep intense memories, faces, voices, simple but sincere gestures that touched me. This experience has also given me confidence in my ability to act, create and contribute. As a phrase that accompanied me throughout my stay says so well: "You never quite come back the same after meeting the world."

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my host organization, which welcomed me with kindness from day one and provided a setting where I felt listened to, supported and valued. Thanks also to my sending organization, who believed in my potential and accompanied me in every step of this adventure, to all the people who surrounded me during these six months and all my new encounters! Thank you to everyone who made this journey unforgettable. It's not a goodbye, but just a new beginning. This experience has brought me so much on the personal and professional levels even human in general. From now on, this will allow me to consolidate my life and professional project in connection with communication and open the doors that I have opened before and during my volunteering !



LONG LIVE THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

AU REVOIR... 4



Seville, 2025

PANNA  
GOODBYE  
ARTICLE





6 months have passed in the blink of an eye, and now I'm at the end of my project. It's a bittersweet moment, because while I am very sad to be leaving this place behind with all these memories and experiences, I'm also feeling grateful and happy to have been able to even be here in the first place, but also that I can go back home to my family and friends who I miss dearly.



During my volunteering here I got the opportunity to engage in many tasks, even ones I never thought I would grow to enjoy, like presenting in front of a high school class. It helped with my fear of public speaking greatly, as now I don't mind talking in front of a lot of people as much as before.



Many times during these past few months where I was asked to describe my volunteering I realized my experience is always very "people-based" as in I depend and focus much more on the people around me, rather than the tasks I have to do daily. To avoid any confusions, no, this doesn't mean that I was so caught up in the people around me I didn't pay attention to my job, it simply means that no matter what the job is, my experience will come out as overall positive, if I'm surrounded by the right people.

I also try to showcase that in my photos attached to my article, in some of them I'm with my family or my friends who visited me, and in some I'm with the people I worked with daily, that made the monotonous, sometimes gray days more colorful and interesting <3

I'm especially thankful for my lovely roommates, while living together has many many difficulties, we always found a way to laugh about it and solve any issues that came up, and there was never any bad blood between us at the end.

As most people, I can also only just compare to my own experiences, so as someone coming from Hungary, Spain has shown me an entirely new way to view life, and I learnt so many new things here in this limited time: "Take it easy, it's never that serious, there's always a solution, you can do it" and similar things circle around in my head as I'm mentally and physically prepare myself to leave this wonderful place behind.

The kindness that people showed me here will definitely stay with me forever, and I will try to bring a little piece of it when I go back home.

I'm extremely thankful that I had the opportunity to participate in this project and to have had such an amazing team surrounding me, I will keep you in my heart forever.



# Goodbye Article - Francesco

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After 8 months, my adventure as an ESC volunteer in AJ Inter has ended. It is with some melancholy that I leave Jerez, but at the same time, I feel deeply enriched by this incredible experience. During this period, I had the chance to do so many different activities, meet many lovely people, and immerse myself in the Spanish culture.



The work with AJ Inter was indeed very diverse. My main task was the promotion of Erasmus+ and ESC opportunities to young people, both in Schools/Universities and on social media. But beyond that, the list is long. I had to manage a weekly English club, organizing class activities with students from a secondary school, helping NGOs such as Oxfam, Madre Coraje, and Dimbali. Moreover, I participated and played as a facilitator in several Erasmus+ programs, such as Youth Exchanges, Training courses, and a KA3 Youth Participation activity. Being involved in all these tasks improved many of my skills, especially regarding public speaking, effective communication and management of group activities.



But definitely, I am mostly grateful for all the amazing people I met and the great friendships I have built. Organizing dinner parties, going out in the evening for some drinks, and discovering Jerez and Spain together are beautiful memories I will always keep with me.

I want to say a big thanks to all the people who have contributed to making my experience so special.

I am particularly happy knowing that these friendships will last over time and that soon we will have the chance to meet again!



Then, of course, living abroad in a new place, with a different culture and a different language, was another important aspect that allowed me to grow and improve. Now I can speak Spanish fluently, and I feel like I have become more open-minded and knowledgeable about a distinct life approach and culture.

I really appreciated, for instance, the big importance that tradition still has for the people of Jerez and the many ways in which they celebrate their cultural heritage.

In conclusion, I feel thankful for these months for what they have given me from a work, relational, and cultural point of view.

I strongly recommend that everyone take the chance to volunteer with the European Solidarity Corps, it is a big opportunity not to be missed!





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**injuve**

# VOICES FOR EUROPE PROJECT

**Voices for Europe** is a youth participation project financed by **Erasmus+ Youth** that is coordinated by **AJ Inter** for 7 months.

It was a great opportunity to meet other young people from Spain, Estonia, Italy & Reunion Island (France) and learn together about democracy. This was the 5th edition, so you may guess how enjoyable this kind of project is for all of us!



# International Project in Jerez de la Frontera

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We worked together to prepare an international event in Jerez de la Frontera from 20th until 25th April, 2025. It was great to see how young people become leaders for other young people, leading a variety of workshops to learn about elections in our countries and in the EU & facilitate discussions about the future of democracy in the EU.

We engaged 66 young students in the highschool Andrés Benítez. They were mostly from Jerez, but also from other countries & continents: South America, Africa, Germany & Ukraine. It was an incredible multicultural event indeed!

Every national team prepared their own presentation about elections to share with students. You cannot imagine how many things you can learn in this research!



You shall try to explain how elections work to other people to notice how complex they can be or not. For us it was important to compare the systems in every country in order to reflect how suitable an electoral system is for every person, for your way of seeing the world and how it should be to be more participative and inclusive.

For example, In Estonia young people can vote at 16 years old in local elections. Our minds blew up! Many young people were against this idea because they think they are not mature enough to make this kind of decision.

Curiously, this was one of the arguments said about women before women were allowed to vote... But who is mature enough to make these decisions? Is it a matter of age? Or is there something else? Is it something we can learn?

In fact, making decisions is what makes us grow up... making mistakes and learning from them! We learned to walk by falling down, and we will keep doing this process until we die. The opposite will be that other people will make decisions for us, so how are we going to grow up to be mature & responsible for our own lives and the future we want?

# Electoral Systems and Political Participation

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Expressing opinions and making decisions was a key topic during the project. We highlighted the importance of researching, searching for trustable information and clarity to share this information to other people, because you can make better decisions when you are well informed and analyse the situations from different perspectives. This process is easier when you discuss ideas with other people who may think differently, especially from other cultures & environments.

We discovered differences between electoral systems in every country and in the EU, how much lack of information we have about how they work and how much room for more participation is missing in all of them, based on the ground that many young people are not participating in voting, for example.

Would young people vote more if it was e-voting with their smartphones?

Would young people vote more if their needs & ideas were considered in any policy?

Another thing to highlight was the way political parties make decisions. Many times we feel like the leader and the team make decisions, do proposals and members just vote, agree or disagree.

We noticed there are different ways to make decisions within a political party. José Manuel Mejías Vega (61 years old) is a psychologist, activist and member of Ganemos Jerez, a local party. He explained how they listen to everyone, choose options that are good for every member, and how they make efforts to find a common benefit!



# Creative Expression and Learning through Games

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There was a place for creativity & fun too during activities! We played energizers every day and a special game called Good Morning SleepyLand on our smartphones to discover how important it is to be active in political life in our daily life, noticing consequences of political apathy.

You can discover yourself playing too at <https://www.plumesoft.games/games/goodmorningsleepyland/> (available in English & Spanish). Luckily, students found some bugs, so we made screenshots to be fixed by developers to make the game perfect to play and learn!

Besides, we invited students and participants to express their opinions about the future of democracy in the European Union in a creative way: painting with aquarelles and in couples!

It showed how we can create something together, the importance of collaboration and having a space to imagine what kind of future you want to live for you and future generations.



# Dialogue with Politicians

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Do you know the feeling of not being heard? Expressing your voice is key to feel heard and so it is to express to the right people in order to make changes. This is the reason why we invited local politicians from the 4 countries (Estonia, Italy, Reunion Island & Spain) and from different ideologies.

We discussed how the EU policies affect us, for example they mention the answer to Donald Trump's threat to EU products' tariffs affecting the sherry wine, our local wine, or to increase the investment in security in the EU. The majority of politicians and young people agreed on the increase, and you, what do you think?

It was a great satisfaction to meet 10 politicians that represented different leadership models, with different ages, genders, ideologies, sexual orientations or religions, expressing their passion for what they are doing. It was an inspiration indeed!

We discovered the European Youth Strategy that can be summarized: Engage, Connect and Empower. Also, the eleven youth goals, if these goals were connected with their own needs as young people. Goal 3 Inclusive Societies was particularly important for them.

It was exciting to see how eager students were to vote in a simulated e-elections! We hope this experience will contribute to their understanding of how important it is to be active in democracy, to express your voice in elections and in other ways, to model a better future for everyone.



# The Future of Democracy

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Finally, we want to thank our partners organisations' contribution, especially for selecting great teams of young people who want to be more active. These are our wonderful partners:

- MTÜ Edela Eesti Arenduskeskus from Estonia;
- Amici del Villaggio APS from Italy;
- Mission Locale Sud from France (Reunion Island).

We also want to thank the highschool IES Andrés Benítez for trusting in us, for recognizing the power of non-formal education methodology to learn.

To conclude, this event has shown that it is possible to change our view of politics and the EU, understand it and participate in decision-making to make the necessary changes that guarantee us a future of peace and a welfare state that is more fair, equal and inclusive for all people. We hope this experience will inspire you to find your way to be more active in democracy!



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## Ask any questions!



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