



AJ INTER JOURNAL

June 2026

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WELCOME CHANGE

DANA - NEW
VOLUNTEER

GOODBYE TO
OUR
VOLUNTEERS
LYNN AND MIRO

TRAINING COURSE
IN SLOVENIA



HELLO DANA

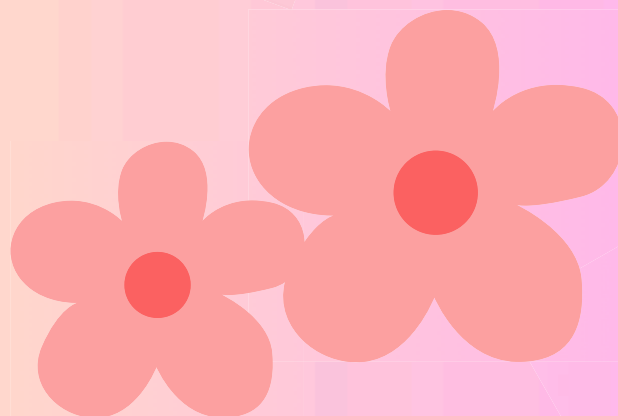
About me

HI! MY NAME IS DANA AND I AM THE NEW ESC VOLUNTEER OF AJ INTER, I AM 19 YEARS OLD. I AM FROM PÄRNU, A SMALL CITY IN ESTONIA THAT IS WELL KNOWN AS A POPULAR SUMMER HOLIDAY RESORT.

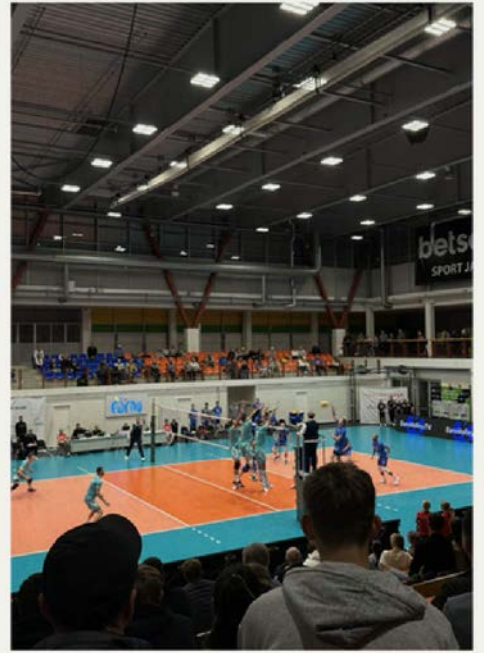
I AM ABOUT TO FINISH HIGH SCHOOL, AND UNTIL RECENTLY I HAD A VERY CLEAR PLAN FOR MY FUTURE. HOWEVER, LIFE CAN BE FULL OF UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITIES, AND SOMETIMES IT LEADS US IN NEW DIRECTIONS WHEN WE LEAST EXPECT IT.



I WAS LOOKING FOR MYSELF, TO FIND, WHO AM I? I AM A PRETTY TALKATIVE PERSON BUT ON THE OTHER HAND ALSO VERY CALM.



I HAVE BEEN PLAYING VOLLEYBALL FOR 3 YEARS BUT BEFORE THAT I HAVE DANCED FOR 7 YEARS. I LIKE TO TRAVEL AROUND THE WORLD, SEE DIFFERENT CULTURES, AND HOW OTHER PEOPLE LIVE. I AM ALSO THAT ONE PERSON WHO LIKES TO GET TO KNOW NEW PEOPLE AND GET OUT OF MY COMFORT ZONE.



MORE ABOUT ME IS THAT I LOVE PLANES. I HAVE A DREAM TO BECOME A CABIN CREW. THIS HAS BEEN MY DREAM SINCE I WAS 10 YEARS OLD.

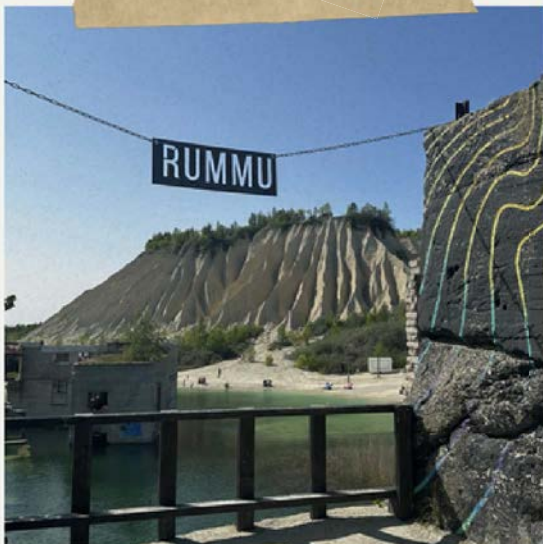


WHERE AM I FROM?

I AM FROM PÄRNU, ESTONIA. MORE SPECIFICALLY, I LIVE JUST OUTSIDE THE CITY IN A SMALL TOWN CALLED SINDI. PÄRNU IS LOCATED IN SOUTHWESTERN ESTONIA AND IS KNOWN AS A POPULAR SUMMER DESTINATION. WE HAVE BEAUTIFUL BEACHES, SUCH AS VALGERAND BEACH AND PÄRNU BEACH, AS WELL AS THE BEAUTIFUL BALTIC SEA COASTLINE.



ONE INTERESTING FACT ABOUT ESTONIA IS THAT DURING THE SUMMER WE EXPERIENCE "WHITE NIGHTS," WHEN THE SUN DOES NOT FULLY SET AND IT STAYS LIGHT OUTSIDE ALMOST ALL NIGHT. IN CONTRAST, WINTERS CAN BE VERY COLD, WITH TEMPERATURES SOMETIMES DROPPING TO AS LOW AS -25°C.






CULTURE



PEOPLE IN ESTONIA ARE GENERALLY VERY CALM AND RESERVED. FOR EXAMPLE, COMPARED TO SPAIN, WHERE PEOPLE OFTEN LAUGH, TALK LOUDLY, AND SOCIALIZE ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT, ESTONIANS TEND TO BE MUCH QUIETER.


ESTONIA





FAMILY GATHERINGS ARE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT DURING HOLIDAYS SUCH AS CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S EVE. DURING THESE SPECIAL OCCASIONS, FAMILIES COME TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE, SHARE MEALS, AND SPEND QUALITY TIME WITH ONE ANOTHER.



WHY ESC VOLUNTEERING



I DECIDED TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER BECAUSE I WANTED TO IMPROVE MY ENGLISH SKILLS AND LEARN HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS AND CULTURES. I ALSO WANTED TO STEP OUT OF MY COMFORT ZONE, CHALLENGE MYSELF, AND LEARN HOW TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY IN ANOTHER COUNTRY.



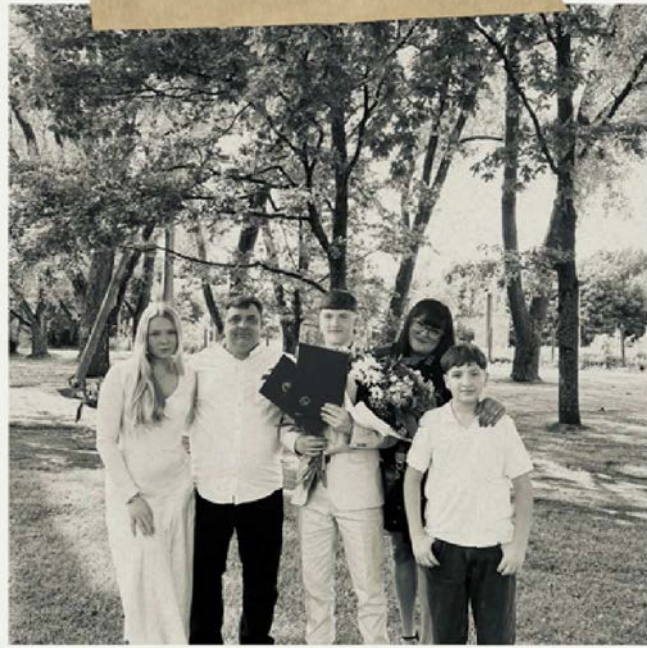
I BELIEVE VOLUNTEERING IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR ANYONE WHO HAS JUST FINISHED HIGH SCHOOL AND IS STILL UNSURE ABOUT WHAT THEY WANT TO DO IN THE FUTURE. IT ALLOWS YOU TO GAIN VALUABLE LIFE EXPERIENCE, DISCOVER YOUR STRENGTHS, MEET NEW PEOPLE, AND LEARN MORE ABOUT YOURSELF WHILE CONTRIBUTING TO A MEANINGFUL PROJECT.

FAMILY

I COME FROM A BIG AND LOVING FAMILY. I HAVE TWO BROTHERS, ILJA AND EGOR. MY MOTHER'S NAME IS IRINA, AND SHE WORKS AS A SALES MANAGER. MY FATHER'S NAME IS SERGEI, AND HE IS A LOGISTICS COORDINATOR.

THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN MY LIFE IS MY GRANDMOTHER, TAMARA. WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I LIVED WITH HER, AND WE DEVELOPED A VERY CLOSE BOND. SHE IS MY BEST FRIEND AND THE PERSON I LOVE THE MOST. SHE ALWAYS KNOWS HOW TO MAKE ME SMILE AND HOW TO SUPPORT ME DURING DIFFICULT MOMENTS.

MY BEST FRIEND'S NAME IS JANIKA. WE HAVE BEEN BEST FRIENDS FOR 15 YEARS, AND TODAY WE ARE LIKE SISTERS. WE ALWAYS SUPPORT AND HELP EACH OTHER WHENEVER NEEDED, AND I CAN TRUST HER WITH EVERYTHING.



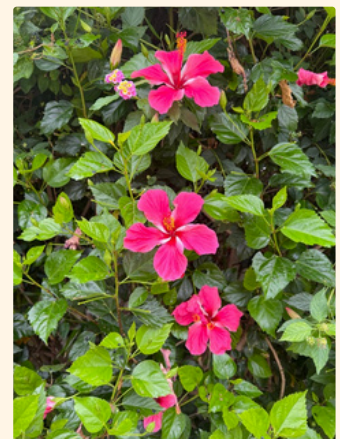
Lynn's European Solidarity Corps Journey

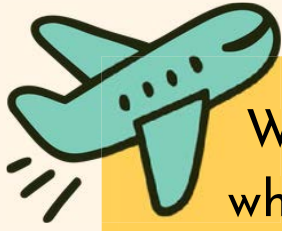


Goodbye

JEREZ

Today, after almost six months of volunteering here in Jerez, it feels weird to write this goodbye article. My time in Jerez was not just volunteering but it became my everyday life. Riding my bike every day, living with three other young people from Estonia, Belgium, Italy, or Turkey, working in the office, meeting new people during Erasmus+ projects, going to the beach, cooking, doing my own shopping, and feeling like a real grown-up became my normal life for six months.





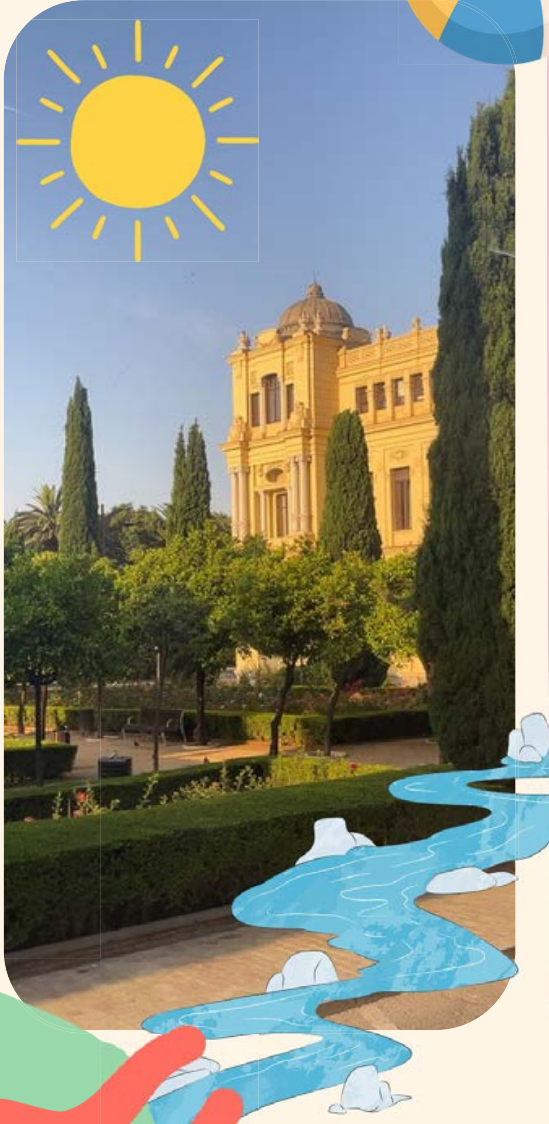
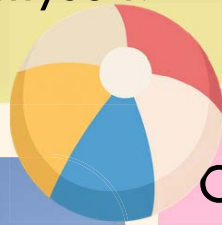
When I first arrived, I didn't know what to expect. Moving to another country, living away from my family for the first time, and starting a completely new chapter was challenging. But looking back, I can honestly say that it was one of the best decisions I have ever made.



During these months, I supported Erasmus+ youth exchanges and training courses, created social media content, wrote articles, helped with local activities, and met people from all over Europe.



Some days were exciting, some were challenging, and many pushed me outside my comfort zone. Those experiences helped me grow, become more independent, and gain confidence in myself.



One of the highlights was being involved in Erasmus+ projects and seeing how people from different countries came together, shared experiences, and built friendships. I also had the chance to travel around Andalucía and discover amazing places such as Sevilla, Málaga, Cádiz, Córdoba, Gibraltar, and many more.

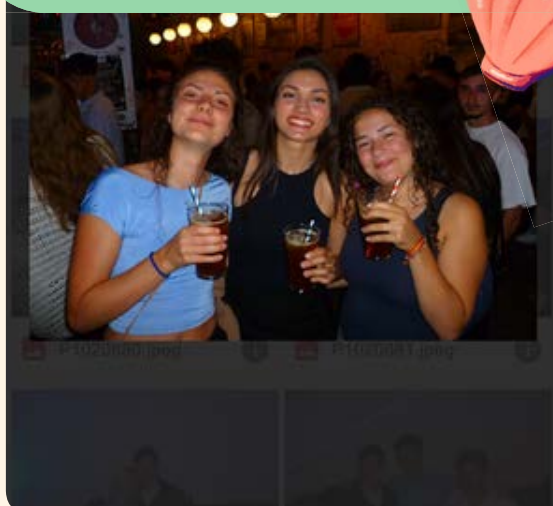


Most importantly, I met incredible people, learned more about different cultures, and discovered a lot about myself. Although I am excited to return home and see my family, friends, and pets again, I am also sad to leave behind a place that started to feel like home

I arrived in Jerez hoping to learn new things, meet interesting people, and grow as a person. Looking back, I can say that all of that happened and much more. I leave with unforgettable memories, new friendships, and experiences that I will carry with me for a long time.

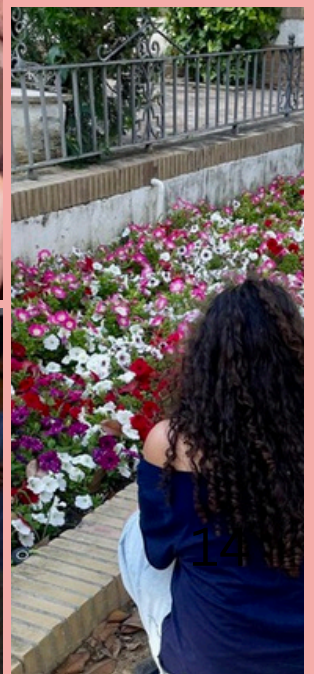
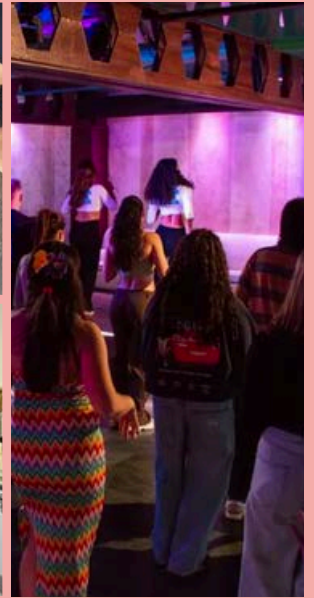


Thank you to AJ Inter,
to everyone I worked
with, and to all the
people who made these
six months so special.



Goodbye, Jerez,
and hopefully
see you again
soon.

-LYNN



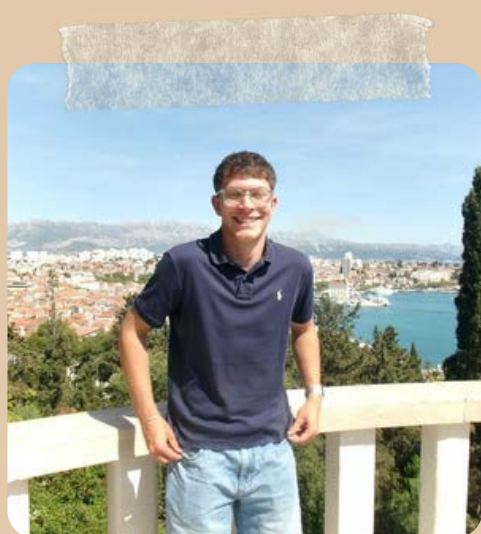
Some more moments

Hello, I am Miro from Belgium. The reason I came here, was to not directly start university and have a good time in Spain. But this experience was may more than this and way more than I expected.

Having an amazing organisation, meeting new friends, learning a lot about myself and about many other things, showed me that this is an experience everyone should try.



9 months after I started writing my welcoming article, now it's time to say goodbye by writing this one. My volunteering at AJ Inter is coming to an end after 280 days. While writing this article I don't really feel like my "new life" is really coming to an end. The new life that has taught me more than most of the time I spent in school.



My biggest goal was to learn Spanish and to get to know myself better ; what do I want in life? Do I really want to live in a place like Spain later in my life? Is this experience really worth it? A lot more questions were floating trough my head everyday before coming here. Now I can say that I am really proud to have the answer to most of them and that my level of Spanish is relatively good now.

It was an experience I was really scared of in the beginning. Travelling alone for the first time in my life to a city I have never been to, to meet strangers and live with them. All this just after turning 18 years old. The first months were not always very easy, but I think that especially these moments were the moments that shaped and helped me the most to develop myself.



One thing I really liked about the organisation is that we have a lot of diversity in the working field. The main work was mostly managing the social media, by creating posts, doing publicity and making TikToks and Instagram reels. Writing articles was a task that I was not the biggest fan of but some of them like this one were really fun to make. I also got the chance to participate in a total of 8 Erasmus+ projects: 5 Youth Exchanges, 2 Training Courses and 1 KA3 political course. I even got the chance to organise workshops, do activities and energisers. One thing I am really grateful for was to have the chance to go to two Youth Exchanges in Croatia.

Of course there is still a lot of different types of work we did. I was volunteering once a week in Madre Coraje and in Oxfam. I got the chance to be a teacher in 3 different languages: English, French and German. One activity I was scared of, was going to a school and presenting Erasmus+ opportunities in Spanish





I got the chance to visit 5 countries in total: Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Croatia (as mentioned) and Gibraltar (if you count it). I also did my first solo travelling in Portugal. An experience that was pretty cool to do but also scary in the first times. Travelling through Spain and especially Andalusia on the weekends was one of my favourite parts. Seeing the architecture of the south, the beachside, the modern but also traditional towns, was an unforgettable experience that I will always remember



In my free time I started working out in the gym for the first time which I really enjoyed, I also started to go running a lot more than before, which was sometimes complicated due to the high temperatures.



I am very happy and grateful that I got the chance to come here to spend nearly one year of my life. The help I could give to the locals, the people I met during those nine months and the friends that I made and all the things that I have learned. In the future I want to continue to live in this Erasmus life and hopefully do more projects in the future and maybe if I get the chance, even with AJ Inter.

★ ERASMUS+ Training Course "Open Youth Work for an Open Society" in Slovenia



2026



**Four Young People from Spain Participated in
the Erasmus+ Training Course "Open Youth
Work for an Open Society" in Slovenia**



Our organization was proud to participate as the partner organisation in the Erasmus+ Training Course "Open Youth Work for an Open Society," held in Murska Sobota, Slovenia, from 8–15 June 2026. The project brought together participants from eight European countries with the common goal of strengthening inclusive and participatory youth work practices. Through our organization, 4 young people Yayi, Bartelo, Nerea and Eva had the opportunity to take part in this international learning experience. Throughout the training, they worked alongside participants from Slovenia, Portugal, Romania, Croatia, Italy, Poland, and Czechia, exchanging ideas, experiences, and good practices in youth work.



The training course was based on non-formal education methods, including interactive workshops, group discussions, simulations, reflection sessions, intercultural learning activities, and teamwork. Participants explored innovative approaches to open youth work, learned how to create safe and inclusive spaces for young people, and developed practical ideas that can be implemented in their local communities



Beyond gaining new knowledge and skills, our participants strengthened their intercultural competences, expanded their international networks, and increased their motivation to contribute actively to their communities. The experience also encouraged them to promote inclusion, equality, active participation, and European values through their future youth work initiatives.

As part of the project's dissemination activities, our participants shared the knowledge and experiences they gained with an workshop. On 19 of June we organised an event where project participants shared their learning from the project and organised European umbrella activity where they promote EU opportunities in a fun way.



In this way, the impact of the project extended far beyond the training itself and contributed to the development of more open and inclusive youth work at the local level.



We would like to thank the hosting organization, Društvo Kreativne Mladine, all project partners, and every participant for making this inspiring learning experience possible. We look forward to continuing our commitment to international cooperation and providing more opportunities for young people through the Erasmus+ Programme.



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