**AZUQUECA DE HENARES**

Azuqueca de Henares is a town located in the province of Guadalajara, in the autonomous community Castilla la Mancha. It is situated in the centre of the country and therefore benefits from good connexions with /thanks to Madrid. Additionally, Azuqueca is only 30min away from Madrid Adolfo Suarez-Barajas International Airport.

The convenient location of Azuqueca gives it both environmental and cultural value. Regarding its population, the town has 35 710 inhabitants, 35% of which are between 12 and 35 years old, making it a significant part of the population. For this reason, the City Council gives special attention to young people.

**THE YOUTH COUNCIL**

The Youth Council is responsible for organising and managing services and activities provided for young people. Its main objectives are:

-providing youth with alternative ways of spending their free time and boosting the municipal areas

-promoting youth participation, enhancing volunteering and associative work as well as supporting youth initiative

-offering non formal education activities in order to encourage personal and professional development

-familiarising the youth of Azuqueca with European matters

For this, we have designed a programme focused on three main areas:

1. Youth animation

Education during free time, intervention in high schools, non formal education, young artists

1. Youth information and dissemination

Municipal Youth Information Office, information desk in high schools

1. European programmes

Eurodesk network, Erasmus+

The City Council of Azuqueca de Henares is part of the Eurodesk network since 2011 and is hosting volunteers from the European Voluntary Service since 2013.

Members of the Youth Council have been receiving specific Erasmus+ training which makes them competent to run such projects.

The team is made up of a Youth Technical Manager, two Youth Workers and a Youth Informer.

The person in charge of the mobility projects in the council is the Youth Technical Manager. She has obtained a university degree in Pedagogy and is responsible for planning and coordinating the youth activities in Azuqueca. She also received additional Erasmus+ training on the different key actions, and has participated in PBA and TCA in 2015 and 2016.

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

As a coordinating organisation, the council is in charge of the economical and administrative aspects of the projects, distributing the subsidy between the sending and receiving organisations as well as coordinating all the actions.

We make sure that each organisation completes its tasks and that the volunteers are provided with all the necessary documentation (European Health Insurance Card, insurance, youthpass…).

The above mentioned tasks are carried out via phone, email and Skype, or in person when possible. We maintain regular contact between the organisations throughout the project and immediately attend to any potential issue.

**PRACTICAL ORGANISATION**

The processing of the required documentation will be taken care of by the coordinating and sending organisations before the arrival of the volunteer. Once the project starts, the volunteer will refer to the hosting organisation regarding his/her tasks and rights (personal support, training, accommodation…). The above mentioned tasks are carried out via phone, email and Skype, or in person when possible. We maintain regular contact between the organisations throughout the project and immediately attend to any potential issue.

**CATEGORIES:**

Cultural Differences

Economic difficulties

Geographical obstacles

This project is open to young people with fewer opportunities, social difficulties, cultural differences, economic difficulties and/or disabilities. Part of the working team has experienced working with young people at risk of exclusion.

Additionally, we benefit from the support of local authority staff such as social workers and educators as well as local organisations and associations working with people at risk of exclusion (disabled people, immigrants or young people with fewer opportunities). These entities usually collaborate with both the Youth Council and the City Council of Azuqueca de Henares.

**PROFILE OF THE VOLUNTEERS WANTED**

This project is aimed at Young people aged between 18 and 30.

Considering the schedule of activities and the population they are intended for, we will assess the candidate’s motivation and interest in the youth field. The will to share their own culture and experience with other young people will also be appreciated.

In terms of personal abilities, the volunteer should have good communication skills, be able to work in team, and show interest in values such as tolerance, empathy and solidarity. Also, little knowledge of Spanish can be a plus in order to make the integration of the volunteer easier and its stay more comfortable.

During the selection process, we will consider any person interested in our project, regardless of gender, nationality, religion, beliefs, political opinion.

The selection criteria are based on the interest and level of motivation expressed by the candidate towards the project, priority given to young people with economic, cultural and social difficulties or unemployed. We will communicate with the candidates via telephone, email, or any convenient means of communication. We will interview the candidates via video conference in order to find out more about their profile and interests.

The selection commission consists in the Youth Council work team.

**BEFORE AND AFTER THE PROJECT**

Before departure, the volunteer will be provided with training about ESC as well as the language and culture of the host country. Once in the project, regular contact will be maintained via several means of communication (phone, email, video conference…). Likewise, there will be ongoing communication/contact with the hosting organisation.

After the project, the former volunteers will be interviewed in order to know about their experiences and to share them with people potentially interested in the programme.

**FRAMEWORK**

Azuqueca de Henares is a town located in the province of Guadalajara, in the autonomous community Castilla la Mancha.

It is situated in the centre of the country and therefore benefits from good communication axes such as the A2 motorway, which communicates with Madrid, Zaragoza y Barcelona, or the railway Madrid-Barcelona. Azuqueca also has a RENFE station (local train station).

The town has good connexion with Madrid, and is only 30min away by car from the capital or 50min by train from Azuqueca to Atocha station. Additionally, Azuqueca is only half an hour away from Madrid Adolfo Suarez-Barajas International Airport.

The town is part of a privileged environment and has three facilities recognised for their educational role: the Municipal Ornithological Reserve, a wetland hosting a variety of birds, the Nature Centre and Apiculture Centre. These facilities represent the importance given to preservation and promotion of nature and have hosted over the years several International Work Camps organised by the Youth Department of Castilla la Mancha in cooperation with the City Council.

The cultural offer in Azuqueca de Henares is aimed at a broad variety of audiences and has two main classical events every year: the National Golden Spike Theatre Show/exhibition in November and the Music Festival “Jazz and other music” in February. The regular exhibitions, the cinema programme for adults, children and families, the Regional Theatre Network initiatives and the variety of conferences add to the list of cultural activities held in the Culture Hall. Throughout the year, the Youth Council organises various workshops such as painting, dancing, interpretation/performance, piano, guitar or choir. Initiatives such as the organisation of Local Painting and Photography Contests are intended to promote the cultural activity.

**ACTIVITIES - WORK**

The volunteers will participate in the following activities:

-Help spreading information among youth in the centre as well as in the high schools of Azuqueca

-Help searching for grants, job offers in Europe, Exchanges, volunteering, language courses, current opportunities and contests on Eurodesk network

-Update and develop the Youth Council profile on social networks (Twitter, Facebook, Tuenti)

-Enhance the European citizenship and European programmes for young people through the participation in Information Days

-Develop and participate in the workshops and activities organised by the Youth Council

They will also be included in all stages of activity programming: planning, implementing and analysis, and their suggestions and initiatives will be taken into consideration. Likewise, they will be encouraged to develop and implement their own projects, in relation to the activities that already exist.

The schedule will be as follows:

-Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10am to 3pm

-Tuesday and Thursday from 10am to 2pm and 5pm to 7pm

Occasionally, the volunteer might be asked to participate in activities taking place during the week end.

It is important to keep in mind that throughout the year, occasional activities such as Information Days, Excursions, Cultural Activities are taking place and are not included in the above mentioned schedule. The volunteer will be expected to participate in these activities, so the presented schedule may be changed.

Most of the activities are taking place in the Youth Centre of the town, although some are held in the high schools and other municipal buildings.

**SUPPORT**

The volunteers will live in the town where the project will take place, in Azuqueca de Henares, in a flat shared for them two.

It is easy to move around Azuqueca and all displacements can be made by foot. On the other hand, there is a bicycle lane in the town and the City Council has bikes available for its personnel, which the volunteer can use if requested.

As previously mentioned, the town is close to Madrid and other important cities such as Alcalá de Henares, and has various means of transport including buses and trains.

The project will take place in the Youth Centre of the town, known as “**El Foro Joven**”. This building has a number of infrastructures such as a playroom, study rooms, workshops for the various activities and practice rooms.

To ensure the good integration of the volunteers and the good implementation of the project, we will provide a number of initiatives during the first days of stay, such as:

-training in occupational hazards

-language training, which will be maintained throughout the project

-city tour during which we will show the volunteer different resources that we believe are important to know: health centre, police office, city hall…

-introduction of the volunteers to other people working in the town, with whom they might have to be in contact with during the project

-establishment of a good cohabitation agreement

-introduction of other young people living in the town, to help the volunteers feel integrated

-information on the cultural and social life in the town

-the volunteers will be provided easy access to municipal activities that he/she likes

Regarding the follow up measures, there will be a weekly tutoring session and the volunteers will be constantly supervised and supported by the work team of the Youth Council.

**WORKPLACE HAZARD PREVENTION**

In terms of risk prevention, volunteers will always be accompanied by one of the team workers who will supervise and direct the progress of their work.

All the municipal facilities have a risk prevention plan as well as liability and accident insurance.

All the necessary documentation for health, such as European Health Card and other international coverages such as ESC volunteer´s insurance plan will be checked prior to the arrival of volunteers.

During the on-arrival training, the volunteers will be provided with risk prevention information. They will also be informed of the location of the nearest health centre and explained the way local health system works. In any given moment, the organisation will guarantee social and health insurance for young volunteers, who can contact their mentors in case of emergencies.

In the same respect, the project will try to adapt, as much as possible, to the needs and characteristics of each particular volunteer. The project could be readapted in case it is necessary or recommended for a positive development of voluntary activities.