

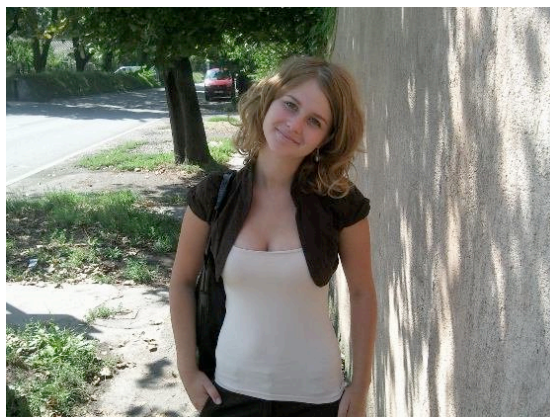
EVS Volunteers at the Findhorn Foundation

October 2010 - September 2011

Coordinated by Ecologia Youth Trust

Barbara Lakatos: 19 years old, from Hungary.

Before she arrived: "I applied for university but I want to take a gap a year to work as volunteer. I hope this work will help me to deepen my understanding of my ambition. My father started an ecovillage 15 years ago in Máriahalom. I enjoy the peace and innovative atmosphere in our ecovillage, but I also feel that something should be done to transfer this place to a community. From this perspective it would be very fruitful to see the everyday life of a community. I would like to experience, help and get to know some new things. I am interested in spiritual world. I think if I spent some time in your village, this would be so exciting because I would get to know another culture and another 'world'."



When she left: "During my EVS service at the Findhorn Foundation I worked in Cullerne Garden. My project was **Chickens Replace Tractors**. A chicken tractor is a specialised movable home for chickens enabling them to work the land instead of machinery, directly offering practical solutions to the global challenge of climate change and sustainable development. I did lots of research, built a chicken tractor, looked after the chickens, and communicated with other farmers. I had lots of opportunities to learn new things like what and how to do with chickens. I also worked with guests in the garden and I facilitated meetings. I learned a lot from these as well, like leadership, how to organise a group, communication skills etc. I was more than satisfied with my hosting organisation the Findhorn Foundation. I think they gave a great opportunity for me. I loved to be there and do this project. I also believe that my project was 100% successful. My work was very joyful and I felt myself so lucky that I could be there."

Miho Mihov: 25 years old, from Bulgaria.



Before he arrived: "My life dream is to be part of creating a self sustainable spiritual and ecological community. The first community I heard about was Findhorn and I met a few people who have been there who expressed their positive experiences from there. I think that the community inspires so many people because it simply works in alignment with the laws of nature, exploring the possibilities for living a fulfilled and rich life. I would like to be immersed in this environment and integrate the experience of one year in Findhorn in my heart. I see EVS Findhorn as a seed I would put in my consciousness and that seed has potential to sprout and blossom in the form of a wonderful tree which will give fruits to the generations ahead of us."

When he left: "My project was in Cluny Gardens: **Reduce CO2 emissions through food awareness**. I spent time researching into the subject of Climate Change, Peak Oil, Carbon Footprint and how they connect to Community Resilience, Growing Food and Gardening methods like permaculture and biodynamics.

Later on I got involved in taking an active part in decision making in the garden team, working and designing the vegetable garden, helping with seed orders, etc. We did preparing the beds, sowing, propagating, potting on, tending the plants, planting out, harvesting, and other garden related jobs. Alongside with the practical activities I developed some educational materials and did educational tours with guests and school children in the garden focusing on the importance and fun of growing food and showing the possibility of starting and maintaining one's own garden. I often

addressed the sustainability aspect of growing one's own vegetables, fruits and nuts, herbs, flowers. I got very positive feedback from the activities that empowered others to rethink their lifestyle or encouraged them to keep moving in the direction they chose for themselves.

My time as an EVS volunteer in Findhorn exceeded my expectations. I feel that I got more than I asked for – all the learning I went through and also opportunities given to me to share what I know and express myself in a broader and more powerful way. I went through some challenges in my relationships with the garden team and my personal relationships that helped me find a better way to accept others and to see them as they really are without judgements and anger. Finally I feel I have a more clear vision for my future and for the service I can offer to my community wherever that happens to be. When I think of my experience here in Findhorn for the past year I feel inspired and grateful!"

Tuva Engebretsen, 21 years old, from Norway:

Before she arrived: "I just finished one year at an ecological and biodynamic Waldorf School in Fyresdal, which has been a door for me into a new world. I think it is important to do something now. I can't just sit on a sofa and watch how people treat our mother earth. So I feel a responsibility, because we are all one. And therefore I think your project is so good for all of us. And to be a part of your ecovillage for one year would give me just what I am looking for. Because at one point I can see myself in a place like that. I look at the earth, the human beings, the animals, the plant and everything as a whole. And I think that everything we have is right now. This moment. So I take it, and give it a shot. I would love to be a part of your community."

When she left: "My project was in the Park Garden: **Fruit and nut trees for sustainability.** The EVS project and experience brought a lot of surprises for me - I have learned so much more in a year than I could ever think of. The project was in it self a great learning with its inspiring and challenging sides. I find my self now in a place where I have a bigger awareness and knowledge about fruit and nut trees, the food we eat and about gardening in general. I have a more clear picture of how I learn best and I am more confident in my self. In the end the project was a great personal success. I am leaving with a feeling of a stronger centre and new knowledge and skills in my bag. I got to know new sides of my self, and I got more awareness on how I effect people around me. I learned to step in to some of my challenges rather than run away. I learned to get in contact with people from all over the world and all different ages."



Mikkel Funnemark, 23 years old, from Norway:



Before he arrived: "I am in my final year of an ecological agricultural school. As it is my goal to learn, teach and educate my self, I would really like to live and be a part of a project in such a well rooted ecovillage. I have a dream my self to one day start my own ecovillage. As a gardener I know that if there is work to be done, problems to solve etc. it is not good to be waiting around, but getting the job done. Then one is safe. Problem prevention is better than needing a problem solution. In my studies I have learned that there are many solutions for converting the modern agriculture into ecological agriculture, and most of them are cheap, easy and simple. One must not think in the ways of destruction and fast profit, but in the way of construction and have prosperity for thousands of years to come. Your project would be a great opportunity for me to have the possibilities and the necessary tools to show people the ways they, in their daily life can have better health and make an impact on the environment."

When he left: "My project was in the Park Garden: **Reinvigorating the local bee population.** I made nesting boxes and beehives to make suitable habitats for a wide variety of species of bees and other pollinators, planted hundreds of plants, beneficial befriendly wildflower seeds and some trees beneficial to bees and wild life. I have been working on implementing the Co-operative's "PlanBee" a national bee conservation plan in the UK. Observing, reflecting, learning, implementing and discovering, has been a big part of my experience. I am delighted to be given the gift of an opportunity to live and work beside such lovely people. It touches my heart to see the devotion of men and women, caring for this land and its community. May your work give our grandchildren`s children a better chance of living a life, in all its beauty, as we know it! Thank you all. Viva la Beel!"