

ESC OUTCOME

MAKE A DIFFERENCE



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Who am I?

Hello, my name is Borja, I am 24 years old and I am from Spain. To know how I ended up coming to Slovakia, we have to go back to July 2019. At that time, I had just finished my studies, so I decided to start an adventure that would take me to know the world and to improve as a person and as a professional, while getting to know new cultures and live thousands of experiences. In August of 2019 I arrived to Malta where I was for 3 months, during my time there I decided to start to search for a longer project in the center of Europe, and suddenly... INEX appeared.



Activities during my ESC

During these 11 months at INEX Slovakia, I had the opportunity to do many different activities, such as tea meetings, in the office and in nature, during the whole year we also worked in the office, visit Integra center participated in trainings, lead workcamps during the summer ...

Tea Meetings

Throughout the project we held several tea meetings, the first was in the office, in which I had the opportunity to make a presentation about myself and my country and also meet my colleagues.

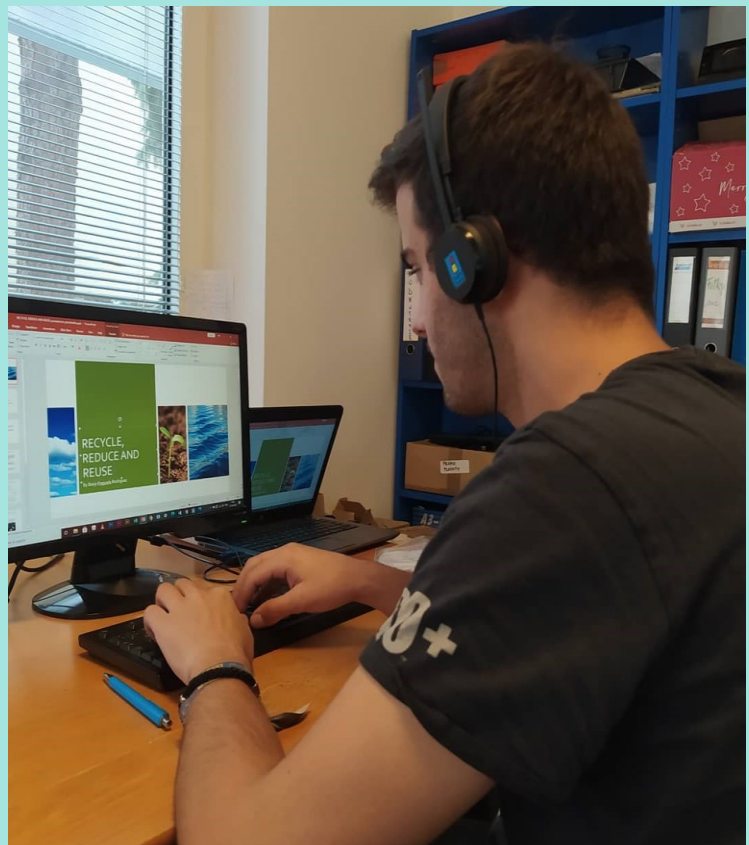


During the lockdown months I had the opportunity to do my own online tea meeting about the mysteries of our brain.

At the beginning of the summer season we began to hold tea meetings in nature, cleaning parks and natural areas with all the participants to leave these areas in better condition so that people could enjoy them during the summer days.

Office work

During the eleven months of this volunteering project, we also combined the different activities with daily work in the office, where we were in charge of uploading our workcamps and those of other organizations to our website, updating and publishing on our social networks, making evaluations about our projects...



Visit to Integra

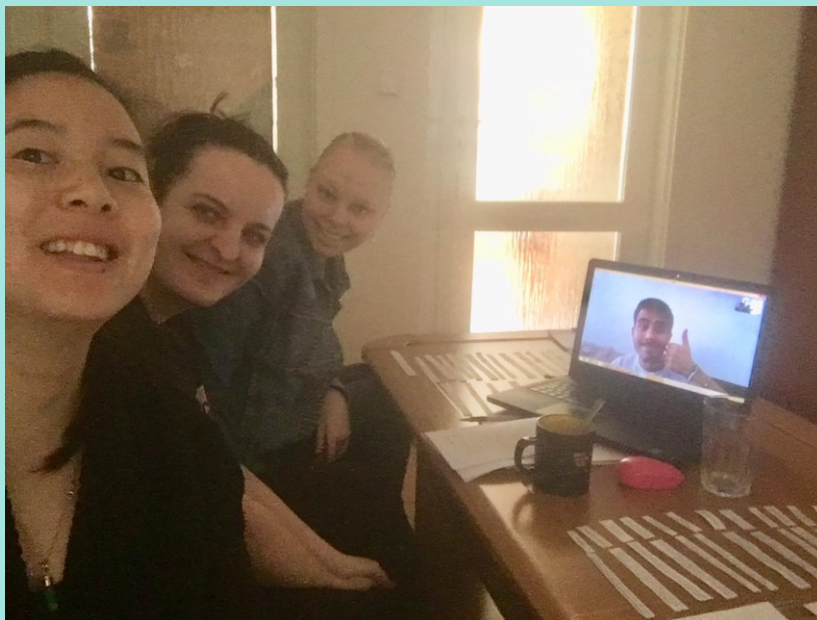
At the beginning of the project, on Valentine's Day we were able to go to Integra to do activities with the clients of this social center. It was an incredible experience, in which we had the opportunity to meet many incredible people and help make them have a good time with all their colleagues during that day.

Unfortunately, due to the situation with the Covid we were not able to return during the year but even so we continue to collaborate with them to carry out various activities online, for example the Mikulas theatre scene that we will do for them throw zoom.



Trainings

We also had few trainings to be prepare for the workcamps in the summer. During these trainings we had to learn how to became a good camp leader and how to manage with the money, problems... This experience was amazing because it helped me to learn a lot of things, like how to cook for so many people, how to manage with conflicts, how to organize activities..., that for sure I will use them in the future.



Summer Workcamps

During the summer I had the opportunity to lead my own workcamp and also to assist to other one as a volunteer, the experiences was different that we were expecting, because due this coronavirus situation, the duration of the workcamps was shorter and also there

were only Slovak people participating, but anyway the experience was amazing.

Now I will speak a little bit more about the workcamp that I have the opportunity to lead:

ECO-SLATINKA 13/08 – 16/08/2020

This was the workcamp that I was leading. During these 4 amazing days I met a lot of new people. The workcamps took place in one small village called Slatinka, near to Zvolen. In the place where we were sleeping the conditions of the life were really basic, but this makes the experience even better. The aim of this workcamp was to help the community of Slatinka to take care of this amazing village, always following one Eco-friendly system.





The job was about rehabilitate the fences of some trees that were near to the road and help them to grow up straight and in good conditions. Also, we were helping to prepare the house where we were sleeping, for the hard winter there, we cut wood, we clean the garden...

In our free time we went to Country music festival in Zvolen, this was one really random experience because when we arrive there, I realize that it wasn't country music, but it was music in Spanish...

SLOVAKIA

Slovakia, my home for a year. Here I discovered incredible people and places and lived experiences that I will never forget. When I arrived in February, I knew very little about this country, but as the months went by I discovered its incredible culture, which is completely different from that of my country. Bratislava was the city where I was living.



In this city you can find hundreds of places full of history, incredible museums, bars where you can spend good times with your friends and restaurants where you can try the best typical dishes of Slovakia.

During the summer I was also able to travel to different areas of the country. Thanks to these trips I discovered that Slovak culture is very different and much more real in the towns than in the capital.

Bratislava is a fairly international city full of people from different countries, but when you get to small towns or not so big cities, you realize what the culture of this country is really like, they are generous and nice people, who even if they don't understand your language, they will try to help you however they can, in general they seem happier and more open than in the capital.



Trips

During this year I had the opportunity to travel to different parts of Europe thanks to the good situation of Slovakia, which is located in the center of Europe, this makes traveling much easier and cheaper. At the same time, the coronavirus situation made me have to look for different ways of traveling. During these months I was in Croatia, Greece, Romania and the Czech Republic.

Romania

This was my first trip, at the end of February (without Covid) and was crazy but amazing. I went with few volunteers from other countries. We rent 2 cars and took a 7-hour road trip to spend 2 days in Timisoara and Arad. It was a very long trip for the short time we were there, but it was incredible, and the city of Timisoara is a place that is worth visiting, it is very beautiful and cheap.



About Arad, I only can say that I didn't like it, for me looks like a really sad city without life, but I don't want to change your opinion, so maybe you should visit it by yourself and have your own opinion.

Czech Republic

From the Czech Republic I was only able to discover Brno, where a friend of mine was living, so I went to visit the city for a weekend. It is an incredible city with many monuments and a lot of life, it is also an hour by bus from Bratislava, which is only worth 4 euros.



Croatia

This was the most unexpected and craziest trip. At the beginning of summer having dinner with some friends we decided to go to Slovenia the next day. We rent a car in the morning and when we leave the work we started the adventure. Along the way we realized that in the area where we were going, the coronavirus cases were high, so we made a change in the route and ended up on a small

island in the north of Croatia, where we enjoyed incredible beaches and unforgettable moments.



On the way back, we stopped at some lakes that are a world heritage site and that I consider one of the most incredible and beautiful places I have seen in my life, Plitvice lakes.



Greece

This trip was at the end of the summer, where I had the opportunity to visit a friend that I made during this project, who is living in Athens.



There we spent 4 days where I discovered places with a lot of history, where I had always dreamed of being. I also had the opportunity to go to a small coastal town where I saw what life is like on the Greek coast, without so much tourism and without so many people.

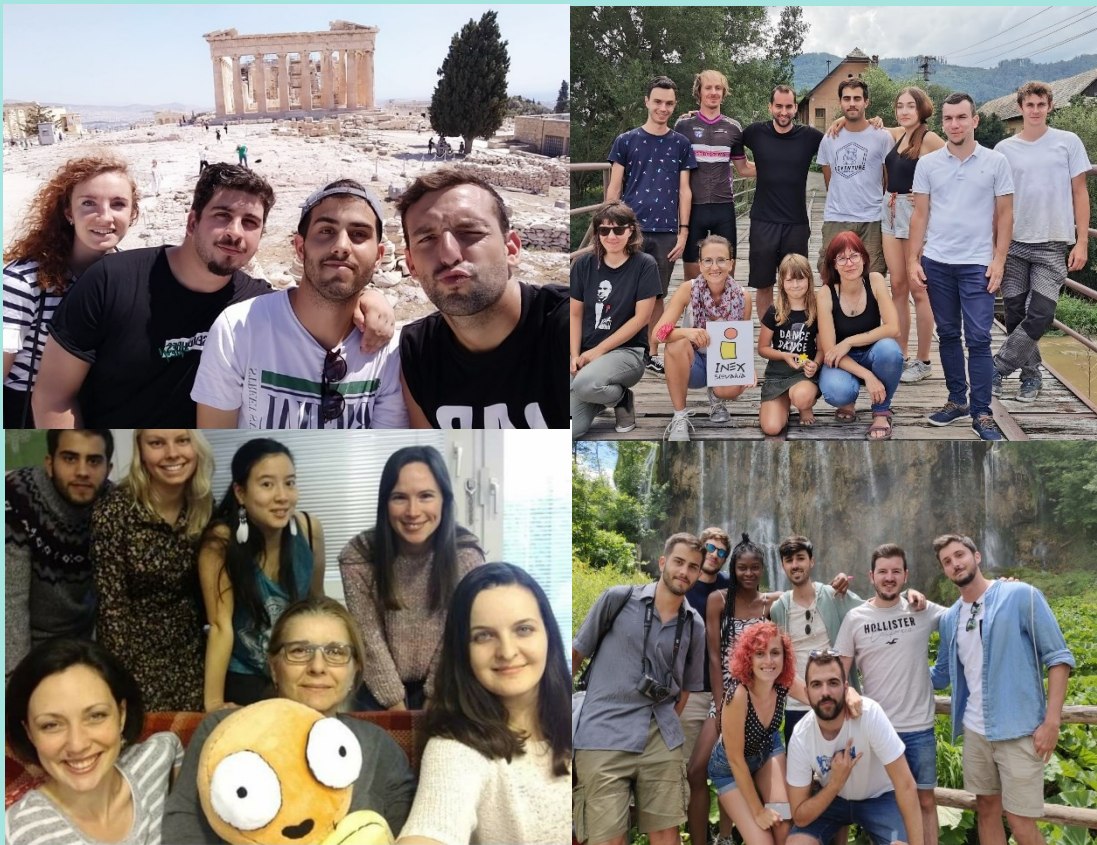
What have I gained with this experience?

During this incredible and unforgettable adventure, which was this volunteering for me, I learned many things that will be of great help for my future, in my personal and professional life.

- First, I learned about new cultures, not only the Slovak, but also that of many more countries where the volunteers were from with whom I had the pleasure of sharing part of this experience. This helped me understand that cultural differences are great but that we are all the same, as the Spanish writer Unamuno said, "Fascism is cured by reading and racism is cured by traveling."
- This project also helped me improve my languages, mainly my English, because it is the language that I use almost all year to communicate with friends and colleagues, but I also had time to learn some basic words in Slovak, which although it may not seem like it, there are of great help in my daily life.
- I learned how to lead a workcamp and how to organize different events, this was something that before coming here I saw very difficult but now I think I can do it by myself
- Last but not least, during this year I gained new friends and met many people that I will not forget.

Special thanks

In this final part of my outcome, I wanted to dedicate a few words of thanks, first to the people in the office, who have made me feel at home and part of this great family called INEX from day one. I also want to thank my roommates, not only for making my day at home easier, but also for having the patience to put up with me.



Finally, I want to thank all those people who were part of my learning throughout this project, with whom I have shared unforgettable moments and one of the most incredible years of my entire life. Thank you all, we will meet again soon.