My name is Kristina.

I am from very beautiful country – ARMENIA. Many foreign visitors have declared about my Homeland that it is an open-air museum.

I was on EVS in Slovenia from 05. 02. 2009 to 05. 02. 2010.

I knew about EVS project from “Youth For Peace And Development” Vanadzor Office coordinator who participated in a training course within “Youth In Action” programme in Poland with slovenian colleague Tina Mohar.

I am a teacher of biology, chemistry and ecology. I have been working in a local school for five years as a teacher. Also I was organizing excursions and conducting environmental, healthy life and etiquette classes with different age group children at our yard. I was a member of “ErAk” youth organization. “ErAk” was organizing excursions and hiking to historical places and other interest places of Armenia for local youngsters.

When I knew about EVS in Škrlovec - daily center for youth and families I got interested and decided to apply for it because that volunteer position mostly matched to my skills and experience.

But first time in life I was alone in unknown environment, far from my family and friends!

 Winter holidays started from 16. 02. to 20. 02. 2009. Škrlovec had a very good organized holiday activities for a really big number of children (near 40). We went to sledding from the mountain in the border of three countries – Slovenia, Italy and Austria, to enjoy in “Atlantis” Water Park, to play bowling, to watch cartoon in cinema “Planet Tuš” and we had an Art workshop in our center Škrlovec.

Then I had on-arrival training in a very glorious place named Log pod Mangrtom from 09.03. to 13. 03. 2009. There I met 16 EVS volunteers from different EU contries. Every of us was representing the face of home country.

I had presentation of my Homeland – Armenia in Škrlovec on 24th of April on The Day of Remembrance for the 1,5 million victims of genocide made by turkish government in 1915.

There is a Yearly Festival of Volunteering in Slovenia. In 2009 it was on 13th of May. Project manager Vojko Vavpotič and I went to capital city Ljubljana to represent our daily center Škrlovec. I met 1st Lady of Slovenia Barbara Miklič Türk and I have a few pictures with her during my presentation of Škrlovec. During the Festival I met also my new friends from on-arrival training - EVS volunteers.

Group of children and workers from Škrlovec with great enthusiasm took part in Mayor’s Cross (Županov tek) on 16th of May. It is a tradition for Gorenjska region of Slovenia.

I had also mid-term training in Škofja Loka. It is the second old city of Slovenia.

Many times I was invited to visit to different centers in Kranj (where is Škrlovec) and in neighbor cities which also belong to Center for Social Work.

On 12th of June both of my internal mentors Vojko Vavpotič and Polona Ovsenar and I with a large group of children from Kranj (Škrlovec), Škofja Loka and Tržič with their responsible persons went to Bohinj to visit »The door more wide« international training course within 20 participants and 3 trainers. They had organized very interesting, unusual, smart and useful outdoor activities for children.

For summer holidays we had organized campaign to the slovenian coast for 3 days. All together we were 50 kids and 20 workers. We came to Koper by train and then to Izola, Piran and Portorož on foot.

For next days we had planed hiking to the local famous mountains, visiting to swimming pool, bowling center, Reptile Exhibition and Capoeira lesson.

I organized exhibition of paintings for half armenian unknown painter on 3rd of July. And on that exhibition I met my future husband.

On 25-27. 09.2009 Škrlovec organized scout camp in Radovna, it's in territory of Triglav National Park.

I had cooking workshop with armenian traditional food during all my EVS project every second Friday.

I learned slovenian language very quickly (in 3 months). It gave me also a possibility to help to children from Škrlovec with their homeworks.

I really estimate the EVS projects, because they give an opportunity to youth of various countries to get acquainted with the cultur, history, language of different countries, to develop interpersonal communication, to develop their skills and to do work for social utility. It makes young people to appreciate the differences between people and cultures, to realize that though we are from different countries, we are equal, and being together we can change a lot of things!

My EVS project gave me an opportunity to organize different events for children utilizing my previous background and skills in education sphere, to be useful for other people, to share my experience and to learn from them, to discover different realities, mentality and culture and, of course, to represent the culture of my country– Armenia.

I shared my cultural experience and helped to organize international, intercultural activities and events and also I learned much about slovenian habits and culture. It helped me to integrate in their community, to get acquainted with different people and made friends with them.

Being a volunteer is a responsible and a reliable task! And being an active and motivated person I was a good volunteer for Škrlovec. I put all my gifts and skills into the best use for the benefit of Škrlovec and I did my best to help in organizing and implementing any activities with the sense of big responsibility.

Best regards! Kristina Mazmanyan