

Urban Keeping – Info Kit

European Solidarity Corps project

Urban Keeping project encourages some practical activities to better manage our cultural and natural heritage according to environment prevention, territory promotion and local inhabitants' well-being.

Working on the town public places is one of the most important aims of our project. It is incisive in order to improve day life quality and above all it is necessary to offer new spaces where social and cultural dimensions can prosper.

The project intends to upgrade two areas of Macerata. One of these areas is the urban park Fontescodella and the other one is Villa Ficana an important and historical hamlet made of unfired clay.

The park is not highly frequented by the local people. This is the reason why it became the central focus of deviant behaviour and the real of petty crime. People do not go there anymore because in their opinion the park is full of dangers. The project encourages young people to approach the park and to give the park back to local people. People need natural places where they can meet and share moments. In the park many activities will be organized and they will be the meeting point of many events in order to give birth to a new public place where old and young can share this environment because the park belongs to the people and more in general the town itself. Participation is the better way to defeat vice and abandonment.

Unlike the park, Villa Ficana is an hamlet of clay brick built to house farming families during the first half of the XIXth century. During the following century, the XXth century, Villa Ficana suffered from prejudice. People who did not live in the hamlet but lived in the centre of the town considered it as a neglected and poor place. For this main reason the hamlet was abandoned and excluded from citizen consideration. The hamlet paid its humble and agricultural origins.

Since 2012 Gruca has been working on the development and the promotion of the hamlet. Gruca has obtained success through activities and cooperation but many ideas are yet to come and the association is still working on the hamlet. Today the association wants to improve local tourism and local life style too. The project activities will be useful to avoid local traditions drop and to get new generations back to Villa Ficana. In this way young people will be the incentive of high cultural tourism.

TASKS The project include six young European volunteers coming from Spain, France, Poland, Germany, Estonia and Portugal. The service will start in September 2019 untill July 2020 (11 months).

Three of them will be employed in the development of the park Fontescodella:

- Organization of public events, production of educational and information material about the park, educational activities for student, disabled people and adults are the main actions designed to ensure, clarify and safeguard the image of the park itself.
- Cultural and natural entertainment, animation, workshops promote the park life as a public place where people meet and have fun.
- Activities focused on nature safeguard, natural tourism and environmental sustainability.

The other three volunteers promote and encourage the development Villa Ficana through:

- Guided tour, practical workshops with clay brick to get young people closer to historical traditions and habits.
- Organization of specific events, for example research, old people interview, information material production, to add value and share our historical memory, our traditions and our roots.

- Cultural tourism promotion through a calendar of events which is designed for new generations above all, for example happy hours, concerts, expositions. In this way we are going to provide young people with the certainty of our past.

At the end of the volunteering period the six volunteers can develop their own personal project according to their own inclinations and passions.

Once learned the language and became familiar with the town and with the members of the association they will be able to freely develop an activity to insert in one of the two main projects.

The volunteer work is no profit making and it only intends to support local community.

The methodology of the activities in the two big areas, park Fontescodella and Villa Ficana, is based on non-formal learning. This kind of learning is the foundation of GRUCA method.

TRAVEL AND ASSURANCE The trips will be organized by the sending organizations which will help the volunteers to find the better way to get to Macerata. The travel tickets will be bought by the volunteers and the association Gruca Onlus give them back the money cash. The sending organizations according with Gruca Onlus provided the ESC assurance for each volunteer. Any visa is requested for the volunteer.

ACCOMODATION AND FOOD Gruca manages some land houses in the historic hamlet Ficana. In one of these houses, Gruca set up a guest house where the volunteers can live. Every volunteer have a single room at his own disposal. Furthermore the guest house has a kitchen, a living-room and three toilets available. In the matter of food the volunteer will receive an allowance (6 euro per day) on the very beginning of each month to manage on one's own and a basket of biological vegetables to share, every week. Furthermore they will receive the pocket money (5 euro per day) each month to satisfy their own needs, as decided by the project Erasmus +. In closing the volunteers will be able to move on foot because Ficana is only 15 minutes walk from the inner city.

SUPPORT Once arrived the volunteers will be assisted by a tutor during their activities. The tutor is one of the member of the association. He will show the volunteers how the association works and which kind of activities they will develop during their stay in Macerata. The tutor will organize a two month Italian course. The tutor will be their contact person for everything, from their activities to the support they need in every kind of life. These volunteers will have available a mentor too. The mentor will help them in getting to know the town and its possibilities. He will help them in solving some logistic or more practical problems.