



**Exploring the role of volunteer tourism in destination image  
formation: A case study of the European Voluntary Service  
programme**

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## **Abstract**

While destination image formation has been researched for decades, volunteer tourism has gained increased attention and interest within academics especially during the last fifteen to twenty years. This research project explores the concept of destination image formation within a volunteer tourism context. Involving a case study on Danish former European Voluntary Service (EVS) participants, the project explores the process of destination image formation through the perspectives of the EVS volunteers. The project uses a mixed methods approach with an emphasis on the qualitative inquiry, in order to gain an in-depth understanding as well as a general overview of the Danish EVS volunteers' processes of destination image formation. Whereas earlier studies have focused on volunteer tourism as an ethical alternative to mass tourism, recent studies takes a narrow and very pessimistic perspective, as attention is guided towards the commercialisation of volunteer tourism. Further, the large majority of studies are centred on volunteer tourism in the developing Global South. Very limited research has been conducted on government funded volunteer tourism within a European perspective, and no research has engaged in the study of destination image formation within a volunteer tourism context. Moreover, research within destination image formation has largely been investigated through the commercial, market and business perspectives. The present research project fills these gaps in the literature. Further, research within destination image formation has largely been conducted using quantitative research inquiries. As the present research project uses a mixed methods approach with a strong emphasis on the qualitative research inquiry, this project fills the gap between quantitative and qualitative studies within destination image formation. This paper provides a more positive perspective on volunteer tourism, as it focuses on volunteer tourism within a non-commercial perspective. The paper demonstrates positive changes in the Danish EVS volunteers' images of several destinations through their EVS experiences. Thereby, this study identifies the EVS programme's capability of changing the Danish EVS volunteers' assumptions and stereotypical perceptions of various countries.

**Keywords:** Volunteer tourism, destination image formation, European Voluntary Service, mixed methods.

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# 1. Introduction

Volunteer tourism is a phenomenon that through the last two to three decades has received considerable attention both in media and among academicians. The great variety in volunteer tourism projects on offer leads to difficulties in providing an actual definition of volunteer tourism. Nevertheless, the definition given by Wearing (2001) remains the most cited. Wearing describes the volunteer tourists as “those tourists, who for various reasons, volunteer in an organised way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups of society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society or environment.” (p. 1). Academic research has largely focused on volunteer tourism within the commercial market. However, the European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme represents an alternative to the focus on the commercialisation of volunteer tourism. Contrary to the organisations that often take a considerable amount of money for the delivery of their services to the volunteers, the EVS is funded by the European Commission (EC) and is thus free of costs to the volunteer (European Commission, 2015(a)). Since its initiation in 1996, the EVS has provided young people aged between 18 and 25 years with the opportunity to volunteer within or outside of the EU. Later, the legal age of participation was changed to young people at the age between 17 and 30 years (European Commission, 2006; European Commission, 2015(b)). As a volunteer programme open to all young people no matter their social, cultural and educational backgrounds (SALTO-YOUTH, 2011), the EVS exemplifies an exciting case of volunteering with a potential to leverage the social, cultural and educational benefits of travel. Success criteria to the individual volunteer project include the process of expectation setting with the volunteer, an understanding of the volunteer’s motivations for participation and the continuous evaluation of the volunteer project. The European Commission (EC) has sought to incorporate these criteria to the EVS through the development of the Youthpass, a learning tool for self-reflection and proof of non-formal learning outcomes, and through preparation and evaluation seminars. Through the EVS it is sought to develop the volunteers’ social, cultural and educational competencies, in order to improve the volunteers’ intercultural understandings and knowledge of national cultural identity and diversity in a European context (SALTO-YOUTH, 2011). In this way, the overall aim of the EVS is to “develop solidarity, mutual understanding and tolerance among young people” (European Commission, 2015(b), para. 3). In other words, the European Commission propose that the EVS has the potential of being a force for the promotion of peace inside and outside of the EU. The process of developing the solidarity and deep mutual understanding starts to occur well before the volunteer arrives in the

destination, and this provides the point of departure for this study. In particular, the study seeks to understand the role that a strong destination image plays in the success of an EVS programme. Hereby, this study claims that part of the criteria for a successful EVS programme must be to strengthen each EVS programme destination's image. The challenge then will be to comprehend how the volunteers process their destination images, in order to understand the influence of the EVS programme on the volunteers' images of EVS programme destinations. Hence, the following problem formulation has been devised:

**How do volunteers form their destination images through their participation in the European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme?**

Thus, the present dissertation involves a case study of the EVS. With the above introduction and problem formulation in mind, this study draws on academic literature within volunteer tourism and destination image formation, as well as EVS programme descriptions developed by the European Commission (EC) including minimum quality standards for preparation and evaluation seminars, and aims and objectives for the volunteers as laid out in the Youthpass Guide. Although not being the focus of this study, the concept of *worldmaking*, which is the individual's conscious or unconscious acceptance of versions of the world and the denial of other versions (Hollinshead, 2009), is considered in relation to destination image formation.

## **1.1 Significance of the project**

Most of the academic literature investigating volunteer tourism is set within a commercial context. Furthermore, the vast majority of academic literature has its focus volunteering in developing countries of the global south (Wearing, 2001; Vrasti, 2013). This exploration of the European Voluntary Service (EVS) adds to the body of knowledge about volunteer tourism by contributing theoretical and practical insights derived from a case study of a volunteer program that is not a commercial enterprise. The present study recognises that non-commercial government supported volunteer travel represents a huge societal potential as emphasised in the overall aim of the EVS programme. Moreover, the case of the EVS is chosen due to its strong focus on informal learning, where a strong emphasis is placed on intercultural competencies. Reports on best practices with examples from various EVS projects outline the volunteers' learning achievements (European Union, 2012; European Commission, 2013). However, these reports do not deeply investigate or seek to explore the volunteers in their processes of destination image formation before, during and

after their volunteering experiences. The present study seeks to address this knowledge gap, as a better understanding of destination image could help sending organisations better target their products. Furthermore, matching the right EVS project to the right volunteer could increase the potential of the European Commission achieving its aim with the EVS; that is the development of solidarity, mutual understanding and tolerance among young people.

Due to the great variety in classifications of destination image as a concept, it now seems more common among academicians to avoid a definitive definition (Bowen & Clarke, 2009). However, for the purpose of the present study Crompton (1979) and Chen and Tsai (2007) as adapted from Fakeye and Crompton (1991) provide suitable characterisations:

“An image may be defined as the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination.” (Crompton, 1979, p. 18).

“Destination image is defined as an individual’s mental representation of knowledge (beliefs), feelings and overall perception of a particular destination.” (Chen & Tsai, 2007, p. 1116).

As a process destination image can be described as a series of influences that affects the tourist through various phases of his/her tourist experience (Gunn, 1988; Beerlí & Martin, 2004; Kim & Chen, 2015). The present study will add to previous theories on destination image and its formation as it searches to develop a new framework that will help explain how European Voluntary Service volunteers form their images of a destination. In this way, destination image is contextualised within a volunteering and European setting.

In a methods perspective, quantitative studies seem to be dominating within the field of destination image (Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010), and a qualitative research approach will therefore contribute to the methods literature. As argued by Ryan and Cave (2005), quantitative studies tend not to let respondents create their own categorisations of destination image. However, in order to gain an overall picture, a brief survey questionnaire will form the base for a more in-depth qualitative analysis. In this way, the present study will make use of a mixed methods approach with a strong emphasis on the qualitative approach.

## 1.2 Aim and objectives

The **aim of the project** is to explore the process of destination image formation in pre-visit, visit and post volunteering phases of the travel experience. Through a case study of the European Voluntary Service (EVS), the aim will be achieved through the investigation of the volunteers' perspectives. The study will have its focus on returned EVS participants from Denmark. The following **objectives** have been set to achieve this project's research aim:

1. To identify by way of a literature review, aspects and phases involved in the process of destination image formation in a volunteer tourism context.
2. Drawing upon the present case study of the European Voluntary Service (EVS) and a theoretical framework as laid out in the literature review examine how volunteers through the EVS construct images of project destinations (countries).
3. Through an emergent inductive research process develop a new framework for the EVS volunteers' processes of destination image formation
4. Identify what actions can be taken in order for the EVS programme to be more successful in the improvement of destination image at EVS programme destinations

## 1.3 Outline and structure

**Current chapter** first broadly introduces the topic of the research project, while revealing the project's problem formulation. Hereafter, the significance of the project is presented and is followed by the presentation the research aim and the objectives set to achieve the aim.

**Chapter 2** is divided into two sections. The first section introduces the European Voluntary Service (EVS) and the goals and objectives which the European Commission seeks to achieve with the programme. The second section presents the two major Danish organisations working with the EVS programme; these organisations are AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE. Both sections draw references to their relevance to the study of tourism.

**Chapter 3** gives an overview of the research design, the data collection process, the research approach, limitations and ethical considerations. In this way, chapter 3 will provide a discussion and an explanation of the methodological considerations as well as reflections upon the present study's research process.

**Chapter 4** introduces and discusses the dominant theories within volunteer tourism as represented within academic literature. These theories are compared and contrasted to the European Voluntary Service (EVS) that represents the case within the present research project. This is followed by theories within destination image formation and the concept of *worldmaking* that are discussed within a volunteer tourism and EVS context.

**Chapter 5** explores and discusses the empirical findings through a case study and analysis of the EVS and its Danish participants. The case study will include the analysis of survey findings that is followed by an analysis of interview findings. Through both a deductive and an inductive research approach, the case study and analysis will build on the theory as discussed within the literature review while exploring new and occurring themes.

**Chapter 6** sums up the entire research project through a conclusion, a presentation of managerial implications and a brief discussion on limitations and further research.

## **2. The European Voluntary Service (EVS) in a youth tourism context**

In order to relate theory, survey questionnaire and the semi-structured interview guide to the EVS, the following will provide a section on the characteristics of the EVS programme. An outline of the aim, objectives and principles of the programme is revealed through a presentation of the EVS accreditation guidelines (European Commission, 2014(a)), the EVS Charter (European Commission, 2015(a)), training and evaluation cycle guidelines and minimum quality standards (European Commission, 2014(b)), and the Youthpass (SALTO-YOUTH, 2011) – the volunteer's proof of learning outcomes and self-reflection. Furthermore, the chapter gives an overview of EVS project characteristics and the countries and regions involved in the programme. Hereby, the following offers an overview of the EVS that provides an important background to the proceeding

chapters. The relevance of the investigation of the EVS in relation to studies within tourism and youth tourism in particular is also highlighted.

The EVS was launched in 1996 as part of the Erasmus+ mobility programme that seeks to secure the free mobility of young people across the European borders (European Commission, 2015(c); European Commission, 2015(d)). Although its name indicates a programme involving European countries only, the European Voluntary Service also has volunteer projects outside of Europe. The countries currently enrolled in the EVS count the 28 EU member states (also named Programme Countries), EU neighbouring countries (also named Neighbouring Partner Countries: the Western Balkans), Southern Mediterranean and Eastern European countries (also named Eastern Partnership: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia), Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, FYROM, Turkey and the Russian Federation (European Commission, 2014(a); European Union, n.d.; Uddannelses- og Forskningsministeriet, 2015). The length of the projects varies from a minimum of two weeks to a maximum of one year. Those projects that have durations less than two month include group volunteering for big events where a lot of volunteers are needed, or volunteering for those participants with fewer opportunities. However, most projects have a duration between two months and one year (European Commission, 2015(d); Harris, 2015). The EVS can be characterised as a once-in a-lifetime experience; it is only possible to participate once, unless the last project lasted for less than two month (European Commission, 2015(d)). The EVS projects offered represent a wide array of fields and subjects including intercultural/intergenerational education; social dialogue; media and communication/youth information; environment and climate change; education through sport and outdoor activities (European Union, n.d.). As a form of alternative tourism, the EVS seeks to take advantage of the ethical aspects of travel. In this way, the EVS represents a form of tourism that not simply aims at growing supply and demand but also seeks to address the broader social, cultural and educational benefits of travel and tourism. As emphasised by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the World Youth Student and Educational Travel Confederation (WYSE Travel Confederation),

“Young people see travel as an essential part of their everyday lives, rather than just a brief escape from reality. This has far-reaching consequences for the places they visit. Because of the way they travel, the social and cultural consequences of hosting young people are becoming even more important than the economic effects” (2011, p. 6).

The EVS programme seeks to involve young people with fewer opportunities that is young people with little to no educational backgrounds. The principles enshrined within the programme are laid down in the EVS Charter, and these principles are to be respected and followed by all organisations under the EVS programme (European Commission, 2015(a)). The Charter also states the importance of accessibility and inclusion of the volunteering opportunities provided, “when recruiting EVS volunteers, the organisations maintain the overall accessibility of the EVS for all young people, without prejudice related to ethnic group, religion, sexual orientation, political opinion, etc.” (European Commission, 2015(a), p. 3). Furthermore, all projects have to involve a dimension of non-formal and intercultural learning; the individual project has to be full-time service; the individual project is to be free of charge to the volunteer; all projects have to benefit the local community, while giving the volunteer the opportunity to interact with local citizens; the work performed by the volunteer cannot replace any employment and lastly; the individual volunteer has to receive supervision at the project destination, while also attending a preparation seminar prior to arrival at the project destination and evaluation seminars both during and after the volunteering experience (European Commission, 2015(a)). Sending, hosting and coordinating organisations are the entities taking care of the preparation and evaluation seminars as well as supervision. Within a youth tourism perspective, the principles included in the EVS makes this immersive form of travel accessible to a large number of young people both within and outside of the European Union (EU). The accessibility of the programme facilitates interactions between young people with socially and culturally diverse backgrounds. As stated by the UNWTO and WYSE Travel Confederation (2011), “[t]ourism provides the opportunity for millions of daily interactions between tourists and hosts to create diverse socio-cultural understanding” (p.9). The EVS Charter seeks to establish criteria for the EVS programme, in order to take the full advantage of the opportunity for socio-cultural understanding. The roles of each entity in the EVS training and evaluation cycle are briefly explained in the following section.

According to the UNWTO and the WYSE Travel Confederation (2011), tourism for young people is represented by the following trends, “Travel is a form of learning. Travel is a way of meeting other people. Travel is a way of getting in touch with other cultures. Travel is a source of career development. Travel is a means of self-development. Travel is part of their [youth] identity – you are where you’ve been” (p. 6). As displayed in the following, training and evaluation guidelines

is a way of taking advantage of the above trends. According to the EVS Training and Evaluation Cycle Guidelines and Minimum Quality Standards laid out by the European Commission (EC), sending organisations are responsible for making sure that future volunteers attend a preparation seminar. The preparation seminar should help the volunteer to understand in more detail what can be expected from the EVS programme. The Seminar lets the volunteers “share their motivations [and] expectations” (European Commission, 2014(b), p. 6), while also letting the volunteers reflect upon goals for their learning. Preparation for the cultural impact on the volunteer as well as practical information on insurance, pocket and food money is also part of the pre-departure seminar. It is also during the pre-departure seminar that volunteers will “have received (...) information on visas [if necessary], residence permits, their legal status as a volunteer (...) and the EVS Agreement [which states the responsibilities of the volunteer, the sending, receiving and coordinating organisations and which is to be signed by each party respectively]” (ibid.). Lastly, the volunteers have to be introduced to the Youthpass – the written paper for the volunteer to demonstrate EVS participation and self-reflection on learning outcomes (European Commission, 2014(b); SALTO-YOUTH, 2011). The sending organisation is also responsible for staying in contact with the receiving organisation (host organisation) during the volunteer’s EVS experience. To finalise the training and evaluation cycle, sending organisations and National Agencies (NA) are obliged to arrange and execute re-integration seminars upon the volunteers return. Alike the pre-departure orientation, the re-integration seminar is an obligatory element of the volunteer’s EVS participation. During the seminar, volunteers will have the chance to share their experiences and reflect upon learning outcomes of their EVS experiences. Moreover, the re-integration seminar introduces the volunteers to further volunteering opportunities after the EVS experience; this includes the volunteers’ opportunity through their sending organisations to become ambassadors for the EVS programme. At the EVS project destination, volunteers are obliged to take part in the on-arrival and mid-term trainings, and it is the responsibility of a National Agency in the project country to arrange these trainings (European Commission, 2014(b); European Commission, 2015(b)). “The main objective of the on-arrival training is to introduce the volunteers to the host country, preparing them for the service period and the EVS experience” (European Commission, 2014(b), p. 3). The mid-term evaluation should give the volunteers the chance to reflect upon their volunteer service this far and should further provide a forum for the volunteers to discuss any problems they might have faced during their first period of volunteer service (European Commission, 2014(b); European Commission, 2015(b)).

The following paragraph adds some final comments on the responsibilities of the receiving/hosting and coordinating organisations respectively. The receiving/hosting organisation is responsible for the allocation of a personal mentor who are to support the volunteer throughout his/her EVS project experience in the host country. Furthermore, the training needed for the volunteer to perform the tasks agreed upon in the EVS Activity Agreement has to be provided to the volunteer by the receiving/hosting organisation. The coordinating organisation functions as the link between the sending and hosting organisations as well as the volunteer (European Commission, 2015(a); European Commission, n.d.). It “carries out some or all of the administrative tasks of the Sending or Hosting [receiving] organisation(s)” (European Commission, n.d., p. 3). It also coordinates the projects “in cooperation with all sending and receiving [hosting] organisations” (European Commission, 2015(a). p. 5), making sure that the volunteer participates in EVS orientations/trainings and receives support. The coordinating organisation is also responsible for the distribution of grants to sending and receiving organisations (European Commission, 2015(a)). An organisation can take up the role as both sending and coordinating. In other words, an organisation can take the responsibilities of sending volunteers to EVS projects abroad, while also functioning as coordinator of EVS projects at home for international volunteers (European Union, n.d.). While helping the volunteers integrate into their new surroundings through mentorship and orientations, it is also recognised that part of the volunteer’s learning comes from the more touristic experiences. Therefore, the European Commission (EC) in partnership with the European Youth Card Association (EYCA) seek to offer the EVS participants discounts on travel and various cultural and social activities, events and exhibitions popular to the youth (Horak & Weber, 2000; Lehtikoinen, 2015; European Youth Card Association, 2013).

The EVS Accreditation Guidelines are put in place, in order to make sure that all participating organisations of the EVS abide by the EVS Charter and fulfil the general aims and objectives of the EVS programme. Thus, all organisations wishing to take part in the EVS have to state their motivation for participation; their capacity for partaking in the programme; the organisations general aims and goals; risk prevention in order for the volunteer to have a safe experience and; the organisations openness towards all applicants no matter their social, cultural and educational backgrounds (European Commission, 2014(a)). The information needed for an organisation to be accredited is also reflected in the EVS database where all of the projects and organisations are

listed. All project descriptions should entail the above information, in order to give the volunteers an informative overview of each project (European Commission, 2014(a)). Also included in some project descriptions are brief explanations of the project destination (European Union, n.d.). These descriptions of project destinations as places of touristic interest indicate that the geographical area, historical sites etc. also play a role in the advertising of the various projects. Once the given organisation has been accredited, it can apply for grants. Specifically in regards to sending organisations, it has to be assured that volunteers attend pre-departure and evaluation seminars. Should an organisation not live up to the EVS accreditation guidelines, the accreditation can at any point be withdrawn from that organisation. Organisations are applying for accreditation for certain periods of time ((European Commission, 2014(a)). In this way, the EVS Accreditation Guidelines seek to remove any aspect that might be perceived by the EVS participant to represent a risk in their travel to and work at the project destination.

To finalise the reflections upon learning outcomes, each volunteer should be offered the opportunity to complete the Youthpass (SALTO-YOUTH, 2011). However, it is known that the process of preparation and filling in of the Youthpass is not always completed (Taru & Kloosterman, 2013). More specifically the Youthpass lets the volunteers explain their key competences gained during their EVS projects. The overall aim of social, cultural and educational competencies are all sought to be reflected in the Youthpass, and the volunteer is therefore asked to comment on his/her development of communication skills, cultural awareness, sense of initiative, social and civic competences among others. In this way, it is also a recognition of the volunteer's informal learning outcomes. Whereas the volunteer's final report on his/her EVS experience is for the National Agencies and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Agency of the European Commission to keep, the Youthpass is kept by the EVS participant and the receiving/hosting organisation and can be used for purposes of recognition of the work carried out (SALTO-YOUTH, 2011).

Evident from the above study, the EVS programme is distinct from mass tourism in the way that it involves a highly planned learning outcome. Furthermore, the EVS represents a highly regulated form of volunteer tourism, and the programme contrasts the general decrease in length of volunteer tourism programmes (United Nations Volunteers, 2011).

## **2.1 Introduction to AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE**

This second section of the introductory chapter to the European Voluntary Service (EVS) and the organisations involved in the programme provides a presentation of the two participating Danish organisations AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE. This section gives an overview of the ways in which AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE are involved in the EVS. Furthermore, it provides a brief summary of the organisations' values and historical backgrounds.

### **2.1.1 AFS Interkultur**

In Denmark, the organisation was established in 1957, and its members have always primarily been volunteers (European Union, 2015). The organisation is non-profit and independent of commercial, political and religious motives. AFS Interkultur is part of a global network under the name AFS Intercultural Programmes (AFS, 2015(a); AFS, 2015(b); AFS, 2015(c)). Founded in 1915 as a consequence of the First World War, the organisation has celebrated its 100-year anniversary during 2015. Originally named the American Field Service (AFS), the organisation was characterised by an ambulance corps of volunteers who helped the wounded soldiers during the two World Wars. After the wars, the volunteers of AFS were determined to continue their work through the creation of better understanding between cultures in order to foster peace between nations. Since 1946, several exchange programmes have been established in order to achieve the vision of intercultural understanding and peace (AFS Intercultural, 2015). As of 2015, AFS Intercultural Programmes was present in 55 countries across the world (European Union, 2015).

The core organisational values of AFS are closely linked to those of the European Voluntary Service programme (EVS), and AFS is therefore involved in the EVS. AFS Interkultur functions as a sending and coordinating organisation within the EVS. Hereby, AFS is responsible for sending Danes to volunteer projects in organisations abroad, as well as coordinating projects for the international volunteers working on EVS projects in Denmark (European Union, 2015). Thereby, AFS also arranges pre-departure and re-integration seminars for the Danish volunteers, as well as mid-term evaluation seminars for international volunteers in Denmark. (AFS, 2015 (d); AFS, 2015(e); European Union, 2015)).

### 2.1.2 Dansk ICYE

Dansk ICYE is part of the global organisational network ICYE (International Cultural Youth Exchange). ICYE was established in 1949 in response to the Second World War, and through the exchanges of young Germans to the USA, it sought to create trust between Germans and Americans. Several national branches of the ICYE were quickly founded in Europe and later across the world. The organisational aim developed to include the securing of human values across cultures, in order to secure peace, justice, tolerance and compassion between humans. Several of Dansk ICYE's programmes involve volunteer tourism (Dansk ICYE, n.d.). Like AFS Interkultur, Dansk ICYE is non-profit and engages volunteers in local chapters across Denmark (Dansk ICYE, n.d.; European Union, 2013). Dansk ICYE decided to take part in the European Voluntary Service (EVS), since the overall aim with the organisation and its work fits that of the EVS programme (European Union, 2013). ICYE functions as both sending and coordinating organisation. Like AFS Interkultur, Dansk ICYE, therefore also arranges pre-departure and evaluation seminars for Danish EVS participants, as well as mid-term training for international EVS participants to Denmark (European Union, 2013).

## 3. Methodology

This chapter concerns itself with the methods used and the reasons behind the selection of these methods in the present dissertation. The chapter comprises **four sections**. The **first section** includes considerations concerning research design. This section comprises five sub-sections. The first sub-section gives an introduction to philosophy of science and its role in the present study. Hereof follows an explication of the ontological and epistemological considerations. Thereby, the reasons for the choice of the inclusion of the *interpretivist* and *constructionist* views are elucidated. In continuation hereof follows the illumination of the relevancy of the concept *being-in-the-world* that is how we as individuals “make sense of things, how we conceptualise, how we act, what motivates our actions, what drives us to do certain things and not others” (Pernecky, 2010, p. 11). The second sub-section explains the characteristics of the exploratory case study and the methodological considerations behind its inclusion in the current dissertation. This will lead the transition to the third sub-section that elucidates the role and application of mixed methods with an emphasis on the qualitative method within this study. Since the present study incorporates the *crystallization* of a number of theoretical frameworks and data collection methods, the relevance of the method of

*crystallisation* will be touched upon in the fourth sub-section. **The second section** focuses on the actual data collection process and explains the steps included in the current study. These steps encompass:

- 1) Secondary information on the EVS programme collected through the European Commission's website and other websites related to the EVS programme, and information obtained through the EVS sending organisations Dansk ICYE and AFS Interkultur's websites.
- 2) The use of an online survey with previous EVS volunteers from the Danish sending organisations Dansk ICYE and AFS Interkultur.
- 3) The additional statistics collected directly from Dansk ICYE and AFS Interkultur.
- 4) The conduct of ten in-depth interviews with previous EVS volunteers from Denmark.

**The third section** focuses on the limitations and ethical considerations in connection to the research, while the **fourth and final section** sums up the methodology chapter and leads the transition to the rest of the research project. The researcher himself participated in the EVS programme in 2010, and this is seen as a strength to the current research project. Thereby, the researcher already has the fundamental knowledge about the programme, and this provides extra time for a deeper investigation.

### **3.1 Considerations in regards to research design**

This section provides a thorough exposition and discussion on relevant theories concerning research design and its use within the present study. Thereby, the section gives an insight to the theories guiding the methods used within the present research project.

#### **3.1.1 Philosophy of science**

Philosophy of science embraces discussions about the very nature and construct of science. Thus, philosophy of science concerns itself with questions in relation to what constitutes science and how we can know about the truth (Godfrey-Smith, 2003; Williams, 2003; Rosenberg, 2012). Thereby, the methods used to acquire knowledge about the truth are also under discussion. As described by Godfrey-Smith (2003),

“[p]eople will often find it a useful tactic to describe work in a borderline area as ‘scientific’ or as ‘unscientific’. Some will call a field scientific to suggest that it uses rigorous methods and hence delivers results we should trust” (p. 3).

The discussion about what constitutes scientific knowledge has led to the creation of several paradigms. According to Guba (1990), there exists much confusion about the actual definition of the term *paradigm*. However, Guba (1990) refers to the term in its broadest definition, as he denotes the term as “a basic set of beliefs that guides action, whether of everyday garden variety or action taken in connection with a disciplined inquiry” (p. 17). In other words, within academics, paradigms embody the beliefs that a scientific report or piece of research has to follow certain processes of inquiry in order to achieve justifiable truths. It follows that there exists various different beliefs in what actually guides the academic researcher towards scientific truth (Godfrey-Smith, 2003; Anderson & Herr, 1999). While Anderson and Herr (1999) refer to paradigm wars in their description of the disagreements between academics, Guba (1990) and Denzin (2010) refer to paradigm dialog, thus signifying the coexistence of the various paradigms. The researcher of the present study argues that the arguments provided by Guba (1990) and Denzin (2010) epitomise the most constructive approach towards academic inquiry. As indicated by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) and Phillmore and Goodson (2004), the chosen procedure for academic inquiry should be guided by the overall research question(s), aims and objectives, rather than a firm belief that only one form of inquiry or one specific paradigm will be able to provide a rigorous and scientific report or research project. With this in mind, we proceed to the chosen philosophical worldview underpinned by ontological and epistemological considerations of the present research project. Ontological and epistemological considerations are integral parts of philosophy of science (Ormston, Spencer, Bernard, & Snape, 2014).

### **3.1.1.1 Ontological stance**

“Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality and what there is to know about the world” (Ormston, Spencer, Bernard, & Snape, 2014, p. 4). The two main streams within ontology are those of *objectivism* and *constructionism*. The main belief within *objectivism* claims that there exists a world external to the influence from social actors. Within a culture and sub-culture perspective, the external reality consisting of values and beliefs steers human behaviour. It follows that *objectivism* proclaims that social actors react upon rather than construct concepts and phenomena within the

social world. As opposed to *objectivism*, *constructionism* is based on the belief that concepts and phenomena of the world are socially constructed (Ormston, Spencer, Bernard, & Snape, 2014; Bryman, 2012). In other words, the nature of reality is “continually being established, renewed, reviewed, revoked (...) [and] revised (Bryman, 2012, p. 33). Therefore, concepts and phenomena of the social world are constantly negotiated. The present research project takes the *constructivist* perspective, as it seeks to identify how the individual volunteer forms an image of his or her European Voluntary Service (EVS) destination. Since this research project explores the process of destination image formation in a volunteer tourism context, a destination’s image is seen as continually negotiated. While it is acknowledged that EVS volunteers are entering through a process in which they will be influenced by various information sources (media, travel literature, etc.), it is also recognised that these sources of information represent certain perspectives.

### **3.1.1.2 Epistemological stance**

“Epistemology is concerned with ways of knowing and learning about the world and focuses on issues such as how we can learn about reality and what forms the basis of our knowledge” (Ormston, Spencer, Bernard, & Snape, 2014, p. 6). The two overarching views within epistemology are those of *positivism* and *interpretivism*. *Positivism* is linked to the *ontological* stance of *objectivism*, since it claims that the existence of a world external to social actors makes it possible to conduct value free and objective research of the social world. Thereby, *positivists* proclaim that the ethos of research used within natural sciences can and should be transferred to research of the social world. Opposing to *positivism*, *interpretivism* is linked to the belief that human behaviour cannot be examined in the same manner as objects from the natural sciences, meaning that human behaviour has to be understood rather than explained. Therefore, *interpretivist* methodology embraces the idea that human beings act on the meanings they make of the world (Bryman, 2012). For this reason, “it is the job of the social scientist to gain access to people’s ‘common sense thinking’ and hence to interpret their actions and their social world from their point of view” (Bryman, 2012, p. 30). In other words, the researcher has to leave behind any pre-conceptions. Moreover, since meanings of the world are continuously constructed through the interaction between individuals, Blumer argues (1962) that the researcher has to grasp an understanding of the world as a process. In this way, the epistemological tenet of *interpretivism* is related to the ontological tenet of *constructionism*. The current study takes the perspective of *interpretivism*, since the process of destination image formation is sought to be understood from the individual EVS

volunteer's point of view. However, as stated in the introduction to this study, it is also sought to achieve a general overview and comprehension of EVS volunteers' destination image formation.

### 3.1.2 The concept of being-in-the-world

Originally coined by Heidegger (1996), the concept of *being-in-the-world* represents the individual's involvement and familiarity with the world. The following demonstrates how the concept of *being-in-the-world* relates to the philosophical standpoints taken in the present dissertation that is the ontological stance of *constructionism* and the epistemological stance of *interpretivism*.

Within a tourism context, *being-in-the-world* is seen as a concept capable of adding new perspectives to tourism studies. By renaming Heidegger's (1996) concept, Pernecky (2010) adapts the concept to a tourism context. Thus, Pernecky (2010) introduces the notion of *being of tourism*. Referring to Franklin (2004, 2007), Pernecky (2010) explains that human beings are placed in a world of objects and places, and it is the sense that humans make of these objects and places that determines the individual's world view. In a tourism context,

“*being of tourism* (for tourism to *be* in an ontological sense), refers to people's continuous engagement with things, people, places, and circumstances that are charged with meaning and significance, and that are marked by a specific inter-connectedness – which both informs and impacts our everyday life. (...) In this light, tourism becomes a fluid, constructed phenomenon” (Pernecky, 2010, p. 8).

Therefore, the notion of *being of tourism* posits that the investigation of tourism should be seen in the light of a *constructivist* and *interpretivist* perspective. Referring to Pritchard and Morgan (2007), Pernecky (2010) argues that although the field of tourism has been studied widely for several decades, a large proportion of tourism studies tend to focus on the field of tourism within a management, industry and business perspective. With reference to Pritchard and Morgan, Pernecky (2010) contends that studies with the management, industry and business perspectives are most often characterised by their *positivist* examinations that tries to explain rather than explore and understand tourist behaviour from the perspectives of the tourists. As maintained by Pernecky (2010), there is a need for tourism research to incorporate more than the objective perspective of the observer. In other words, there is a need for a more *emic* rather than *etic* research approach. Thus,

Pernecky (2010) states that although the *etic* research approach also has its values, the *emic* approach and the notion of *being of tourism* provides us with the potential to obtain an understanding of “how we make sense of things, how we conceptualise, how we act, what motivates our actions, what drives us to do certain things and not others” (p.11). Applied to the present research project, the concept of *being of tourism* provides the opportunity to explore and comprehend how EVS volunteers make sense of the world. Thereby, this study mostly represents one version of the social reality, rather than providing one definitive truth. This leads us to the following sub-section on the discussion of the chosen approach within the present dissertation that makes use of a mixed methods approach with a strong emphasis on the qualitative aspect.

### **3.1.3 Strategy of inquiry: mixed methods**

Since its introduction, the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches through a mixed methods approach has been permeated with controversies. Disputes mainly concern whether or not the ontological and epistemological tenets of qualitative and quantitative research inquiry allows for a combination of the two approaches. Nevertheless, a greater number of academics have come to appreciate the use of mixed methods, and this has resulted in a great variety of approaches to mixed methods (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Johnson et al., 2007; Hesse-Biber, 2010).

Inviting leading academicians within mixed methods research to provide their definitions of mixed methods, Johnson et al. (2007) display the varied approaches to mixed methods research. With Johnson et al.’s investigation (2007) also follows a comprehension of the various possible ways in which qualitative and quantitative methods can be combined. Of the 19 definitions investigated, 15 stated that mixed methods comprised of the mixing of qualitative and quantitative methods in some order. However, there was no general agreement as to the degree of integration of either the qualitative or the quantitative approach within mixed methods (Johnson et al., 2007). Hesse-Biber (2010) proclaims that the quantitative approach to mixed methods remains the dominant. As stated by Hesse-Biber (2010), there is a need for mixed methods with emphasis on the qualitative approach that will give way for the perspectives of the research participants. In line with the *interpretivist* and *constructivist* viewpoint taken and the overall problem formulation, the current study aligns with Hesse-Biber’s (2010) qualitative approach to mixed methods.

Johnson et al. (2007) demonstrate through their search for a mixed methods definition that mixed methods can be understood as the mixture of different paradigms, various forms of data collection, different forms of analysis, etc. within a qualitative and quantitative research combination. Based on their research, Johnson et al. (2007) provide their own definition, which is thought appropriate for the purpose of the present study due to the breadth of the definition that does not favour the quantitative approach above the qualitative approach:

“Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or a team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g. use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” (p, 123).

In other words, the strength of mixed methods is that it allows the researcher to take advantage of the combined strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. In addition, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) state that “the strengths of an additional method [can be utilised] to overcome the weaknesses of another by using both in a research study” (p. 21). Bryman (2012) refers to the *offset*, referring to the possibility of compensation for each of the methods weaknesses. As demonstrated in the above quote by Johnson et al. (2007), qualitative data can be used in order to display further evidence that confirm or support the findings within quantitative data and vice versa (*corroboration*) (Johnson et al., 2007). On the opposite, qualitative data can also be used to trace out divergent cases within a quantitative data analysis (Bryman, 2012). In his examination of 232 academic journal articles, Bryman (2012) refers to *triangulation* as the most common explanation of the advantages inherent in mixed methods. *Triangulation* refers to the use and combination of two or more methods (for instance the use of a quantitative data in form of a survey in combination with qualitative data consisting of in-depth interviews) for adding greater validity. However, for the purpose of the present study I shall make use of the method of *crystallization*. According to Ellingson (2009), *crystallization* is characterised by the use of variable forms of data collection and theoretical frameworks that create multiple realities, rather than conforming to one definitive truth. Rather than seeking to explain the social world, *crystallization* engages the researcher in the process of exploration (Ellingson, 2009). The concept of *crystallization* will be explained and discussed further in a later sub-section.

While there are advantages and strengths to mixed methods, there are also challenges and weaknesses. As outlined by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) and Bryman (2012), one of the greatest challenges within mixed methods stems from arguments resting on the incompatibility of ontological and epistemological tenets within qualitative and quantitative research respectively. Highlighted by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), another challenge within mixed methods relates to the time and resources of which the researcher has to invest in being acquainted with both qualitative and quantitative methods. Further, more time has to be invested in data collection. Another aspect relevant to the present study is the still existing uncertainties that still exist within mixed methods research:

“Some of the details of mixed research remain to be worked out fully by research methodologists (e.g. [...] how to qualitatively analyse quantitative data, how to interpret conflicting results)” (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 21).

However, the above challenges to mixed methods should represent an interesting case for the present study. Moreover, it seems that the mixed methods approach provides more advantages, strengths and opportunities than weaknesses and disadvantages. The following paragraph gives an overview of the various ways in which qualitative and quantitative methods can be combined within mixed methods.

The weight between qualitative and quantitative approaches has been distributed through an emphasis on the quantitative (QUAN-qual), the qualitative (QUAL-quan) or an equal weight between the qualitative and quantitative approaches (QUAN-QUAL) (Johnson et al., 2007). As demonstrated by Bryman (2012) and Hesse-Biber (2010), mixed methods can also be combined in different sequences or phases through a mixed methods sequential design. For instance, the initial sequence or phase could consist of a qualitative data collection in form of in-depth interviews that are qualitatively analysed and results are presented. As explained by Fuentes (2008), the second sequence or phase would then “identify qualitative results to test [through the use of a survey] on [a] larger population” (as in Hesse-Biber, 2010, p. 459). The two phases will then lead to an overall interpretation. Fuentes (2008) coins this process as a sequential mixed methods design. As emphasised in the introduction to the present research project, this research takes a qualitative approach to mixed methods research. More precisely this research project’s collection and analysis of data is divided into two phases. The first phase involves the collection and analysis of

quantitative data through a survey. Based on the predominantly qualitative analysis of the quantitative survey data, the second phase comprised of purposive sampling and analysis of in-depth interviews. Finally, the two phases lead to an overall interpretation. This process will be clarified in depth in a later section on the data collection process of the present research project.

The next sub-section consists of an explanation and a deliberation of the methods of *crystallization* and its usage within the present study.

### **3.1.4 Crystallization**

Originally coined by Richardson (1994, 2000), the term *crystallization* refers to the use of multiple methods that does not seek one single truth. As stated by Richardson (2000), “Crystallization provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic” (as cited in Ellingson, 2009, p. 3). Through a discussion on the concept of crystallization, Ellingson (2009) further develop Richardson’s (2000) conception. Although Ellingson (2009) refer to *crystallization* as the use of multiple methods for data collection within the qualitative inquiry, she also opens up for a wider interpretation of the term. Albeit not engaging in an in-depth discussion on the combinations of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis within *crystallization*, Ellingson (2009) do emphasise the possibility of combining quantitative and qualitative research methods within *crystallization*. However, *crystallization* does not combine quantitative and qualitative research methods for the purpose of triangulation:

“Whereas triangulation seeks a more definitive truth, crystallization problematizes the multiple truths it presents. Unlike triangulation, crystallization is informed by postmodernism, meaning that it presupposes that no truth exists “out there” to be discovered or get close to, but only multiple and partial truths that researchers (and others) co-construct” (Ellingson, 2009, p. 22).

Within the present dissertation, this means that knowledge about Danish EVS volunteers’ destination image formation is co-constructed by the researcher and the Danish EVS volunteers. In other words, the co-construction within the present study consists of the researcher’s interpretation of Danish EVS volunteers’ interpretations and understandings of the world. Thereby, *Crystallization* as a methodological framework fits the constructionist approach within the present research project. Further, the use of *crystallization* was thought beneficial to the present research project, since it lets the researcher make use of various methods (more than one) and frameworks

Thereby, the use and combination of multiple frameworks and ways of collecting and analysing data opens up for more than one version of the destination image formation construct within a volunteer tourism context.

### **3.1.5 Exploratory case study**

The case study represents an approach “that aids in-depth exploration and insight into (...) [a] research phenomenon more generally” (Ormston, Spencer, Bernard & Snape, 2014, p. 66). Due to the reason that qualitative research approaches such as un-structured interviewing, participant observation, etc. represent inquiries that provide an in-depth exploration of a given subject, the case study is often linked to the qualitative research approach. However, both quantitative and mixed methods approaches are also applied within case studies (Rowley, 2002; Ormston, Spencer, Bernard & Snape, 2014; Bryman, 2012).

“With a case study, the case is an object of interest in its own right, and the researcher aims to provide an in-depth elucidation of it” (Bryman, 2012, p. 69). Thereby, a unit (or object) of interest is to be identified and explored through in-depth analysis. The unit of interest within the present dissertation is the European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme. Several forms of case studies exist (Rowley, 2002; Bryman, 2012). Within the present dissertation, the case study of the European Voluntary Service Programme (EVS) represents the unique case, as it separates itself from commercial volunteer tourism that seems to represent the far most common form of volunteering abroad.

The present research makes use of an exploratory rather than confirmatory technique, thus applying an exploratory case study to the research project. Thereby, this research does not rely on the testing of hypotheses. According to Schutt (2006), “Exploratory research seeks to find out how people get along in the setting under question, what meaning they give to their actions, and what issues concern them” (p. 14). In this way, the exploratory case study follows the constructionist view as applied within the current research project, as it seeks to comprehend the setting under question from the perspectives of the research participants. Although the exploratory case study is characterised by the collection of data prior to the formation of the final problem formulation, research question(s), methodological guidelines and theories (Yin, 2012), this paper developed through the establishment of the problem formulation prior to data collection. Further, theory and

methods were established prior to the collection of data, thus informing the questions used within semi-structured interviews and a survey questionnaire. However, the exploratory aspect within the present study is represented through the development of a framework that adds a new theoretical perspective to the concept of destination image formation. As highlighted in the introduction, the present study will add to previous theories on destination image and its formation as it searches to develop a new framework that will help explain how European Voluntary Service volunteers form their images of a destination. In this way, destination image is contextualised within a volunteering and European setting. Thereby, the paper follows both an inductive and a deductive research approach.

With the research design considerations in mind, the next couple of sub-sections explicate the actual data collection process within this paper.

## **3.2 Data collection process**

As this research project consists of two data collection processes involving a survey<sup>1</sup> followed by semi-structured interviews<sup>2</sup>, the following elucidates the way in which the survey was designed, how the participants were accessed, the criteria for the selection of interview participants, the structuring of interview questions and how the quantitative survey results and the qualitative interview results were analysed.

### **3.2.1 First data collection phase**

The first data collection phase is characterised by the gathering of quantitative data in form of a survey. As described by Creswell (2014), “A survey design provides quantitative or numeric descriptions of trends, attitudes or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. From sample results, the researcher generalizes or draws inferences to the population” (p. 155).

#### **3.2.1.1 The survey**

The initial idea for the present study was to collect a sample of European Voluntary Service (EVS) participants from various different countries to represent the larger population of EVS participants.

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<sup>1</sup> Confer appendix 1 (Survey questionnaire) and appendix 2 (Survey results).

<sup>2</sup> Confer appendix 3a-k (Interview guides) and appendix 4a-j (Transcriptions of semi-structured interviews). The attached USB stick includes the interview recordings of all ten interviews.

However, I – the researcher – quickly realised the difficulties in reaching a representative sample of the vast group of EVS participants dispersed across various countries. Therefore, the sample was narrowed down to include Danish EVS participants only. Still, this left the researcher with a group of future, current and former Danish EVS participants. For the sake of simplicity, only Danish former EVS participants were included as research participants. In other words, while it might have been difficult to reach an equal number of future, current and former EVS participants, it would also to an excessive extent complicate the formation of research questions for both the survey and the following semi-structured interviews.

After having narrowed down the sample to represent Danish former EVS participants, a process followed in which the researcher investigated how to gain access to the largest number possible of Danish former EVS participants. While the researcher already knew one of the sending organisations (AFS Interkultur) from previous EVS experience, one more organisation (Dansk ICYE) was found to send Danish EVS participants abroad. Although other associations and organisations have the possibility of being accredited under the EVS programme, the two above-mentioned organisations have been accredited for several years and therefore have plenty of experience with sending Danish EVS participants abroad (Uddannelses- og Forskningsministeriet, 2015). Therefore, the contact to the two Danish EVS sending organisations AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE was thought to provide access to a representative sample of Danish former EVS participants in the years from 2012 to 2015.

The survey was sent to 158 Danish former EVS participants through AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE. 61 usable responses were received, which leads to a response rate of 38.6%. While Magione (1995) states that a response rate lower than 50% is not acceptable within self-completion questionnaires (surveys), Bryman (2012) emphasises that numerous examples can be found of surveys with response rates well below 50%. Considering the small population from which responses were received, the present survey is considered representative of the general population of Danish former EVS volunteers in the years from 2012-2015. The survey questionnaire was distributed between 32 and 126 former EVS participants through AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE respectively. 18 usable responses were received from AFS Interkultur (response rate of 53.6%), and 43 usable responses were received from Dansk ICYE (response rate of 34.1%). The survey was sent to the Danish former EVS participants through AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE on October 28<sup>th</sup>,

2015, and November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015 respectively. The survey questionnaire through Dansk ICYE was sent to the participants slightly later than to the participants from AFS Interkultur. Due to technical issues the mail including the survey questionnaire initially ended up in EVS Coordinator for Dansk ICYE Pia Lieberknecht's spam folder. 43 answers were received during the first round. A reminder was sent to the Danish former EVS participants on November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Another 18 responses were recorded during the second round. No answers were received during the last two days prior to the closing of the survey on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015, and it therefore seems that the late distribution of the survey to the former EVS participants through Dansk ICYE in relation to AFS Interkultur did not cause the lower response rate from participants through Dansk ICYE. Although a few of the respondents misunderstood one or two questions within the survey, this did not justify the exclusion of these respondents from the survey. While misunderstanding a question on the aims the individual EVS projects, a few respondents instead provided extra information about their motivations for EVS participation.

The survey was designed through the survey creator Google Forms<sup>3</sup>, as it was considered an appropriate alternative to for instance the online survey SurveyMonkey that does not allow for more than a few questions unless a fee is paid. The design of the questions for the survey was created with the theory of destination image formation in mind. The quantitative survey results were analysed with the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Before delving into the respondents' (EVS volunteers) answers to the open-ended questions on motivations for EVS participation and changes in perceptions, it was considered appropriate to first investigate the degree to which the survey could be said to be representative of the general population of Danish EVS volunteers. The respondents' answers to the open-ended questions within the survey were categorised in relation to the theories as deliberated in the literature review. Hereafter followed the counting of the number of times that each of the categories occurred within the respondents' answers. Since each respondent's answer often imply the occurrence of several/more than one category/categories, the total percentage across the categories reach above 100 percent. However, the importance lies in the number and percentage of respondents expressing each category. In order to briefly explore whether or not differences occurred in regards to demographics, previous visit of EVS destination, previous volunteer experience and sending organisation, the method of cross-tabulation was applied (confer appendix 5 for an overview of the results). While the quantitative

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<sup>3</sup> Confer appendix 1 to get an overview of the online survey questionnaire.

analysis provide a general overview of the themes occurring within the survey, the qualitative analysis provide examples of the general tendencies within the survey. Further, the survey was supported with statistics or estimates provided by AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE for the comparison with the general population of Danish former EVS volunteers.

### **3.2.2 Second data collection phase**

The second phase consists of a qualitative data collection in form of semi-structured interviews. As explained by Bryman (2014), semi-structured interviews are used in order to let “concepts and theories (...) emerge out of the data” (p. 12). Thereby, while the semi-structured interview follows a structure based on different themes, it is also open to follow-up questions based on the emergence of new themes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In this way, the use of semi-structured interviews reflect the method of induction within the present study. Nevertheless, the semi-structured interviews build on the theories as deliberated in the literature review as well as the analysed survey results, thus reflecting the deductive method.

#### ***3.2.2.1 Selection of interview participants***

At the end of the survey questionnaire, the respondent was asked whether he/she was interested in the participation in an interview. If interested in an interview, the respondent was asked to provide his/her email address and Skype name, in order for the researcher to get in contact with the individual respondent. The interviews were then conducted through the video and voice call software programme Skype and recorded utilising the audio recorder software programme Audacity. 36 of the 61 respondents signed up for interviews. Time wise it would have been difficult to interview all the respondents who were interested in interview participation. Therefore, 10 interviewees were selected through purposive sampling (also referred to as nonprobability sampling) (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). As explicated by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003), purposive sampling involves the purposive selection of cases or units “based on a specific purpose rather than randomly” (as cited in Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Thereby, purposive sampling was conducted based upon the interviewees’ representativeness in relation to the respondents within the survey and in relation to the general population of Danish former EVS participants in the years between 2012-2015. The criteria involved...

- ...the representation of a dispersed age group.
- ...the representation of different educational backgrounds.

- ...differences in length of EVS projects ranging from short-term to long-term.
- ...the representation of EVS projects both inside and outside of Europe, as well as projects in Eastern and Western Europe.
- ...the representation of both male and female EVS participants/volunteers.
- ...the representation of both AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE (sending organisations).

Only four male EVS participants signed up for interviews. Only one male EVS participant was interviewed due to difficulties in getting in contact with the other male participants. Further, two of the male EVS volunteers had done their projects in the same country (Romania).

### ***3.2.2.2 Interview design and analysis***

The ten interviews were conducted between November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015, and November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The interviews lasted between 20 mins. 30 sec. and 30 mins. The design of the interview guides for the interview participants was created in two rounds. First, a general interview guide was created based on themes occurring within the survey and the literature review.<sup>4</sup> The interview guide was divided into three sections that included the pre-, during and post volunteering experience. Hereafter a second round followed in which the general interview guide was targeted to each of the selected interview participants based on their answers in the survey.<sup>5</sup> Thereby, the interviews sought to investigate unexplored general and individual themes occurring in the survey.

After the transcription of the recorded interviews, a process followed in which the transcriptions were ordered and divided into themes for the conduction of a thematic analysis. Thereby, the analysis of the interviews followed the procedure as described in Bryman (2014, p. 13). Core themes were identified within and between the interviews, “with the analysis of qualitative data of these kinds, coding is a process whereby the data are broken down into their component parts and those parts are then given labels” (Bryman, 2014, p. 13). Hereafter, the themes and matching quotes were entered into a scheme<sup>6</sup> in order to provide an overview.

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<sup>4</sup> Confer appendix 3a.

<sup>5</sup> Confer appendix 3b-k.

<sup>6</sup> Confer appendix 6.

### 3.2.2.3 Ethical considerations

During the process of data collection, aspects were taken into consideration in relation to the confidentiality of personal information. Thereby, the researcher was granted permission to include the names of both the interview participants (first names) and the EVS coordinators (full names) from the two Danish sending organisations AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE. Furthermore, the information provided by AFS interkultur and Dansk ICYE on their EVS volunteers was of a general rather than personal nature.

## 4. Literature review and theoretical frameworks

Through a review of academic literature, this chapter will identify and discuss aspects and phases involved in the process of destination image formation in a volunteer tourism context. Throughout the chapter, the literature on volunteer tourism and destination image is linked to a European Voluntary Service (EVS) context. The chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section situates volunteer tourism within the broader tourism industry. Through an exploration of the dominating discussions within the volunteer tourism literature, this section also discusses the knowledge gaps when relating existing literature to the EVS. Thereby, the section adds to the existing literature by drawing upon the way in which the European Voluntary Service (EVS) distinguishes itself from the dominating discussions concerning the types of volunteer tourism programmes and sending organisations. In this way, the present literature review argues for attention to the concept of volunteer tourism that goes beyond a commercial focus. Further, attention is drawn to volunteer tourism that is not limited to projects in developing countries in the *Global South*. The second section focuses on various attributes and components that help create a destination's image, while also exploring the concept of destination image as a process. The third section seeks a comprehension of the interconnection between destination image, the related concept of *world-making* and the peace proposition within volunteer tourism. The third section is deemed relevant in relation to the exploration of the importance of destination image for the European Commission to achieve its overall aim with the EVS programme, that is the development of "solidarity, mutual understanding and tolerance among young people" (European Commission, 2015(b), para. 3). Various frameworks and their relevance to the present study are considered through each of the sections. A concluding section sums up the literature review and theoretical

chapter, thus leading the transition to the analysis chapter and the case study of the European Voluntary Service (EVS).

## **4.1 Volunteer tourism**

The following sub-sections introduce the dominant theories on volunteer tourism, while positioning the European Voluntary Service (EVS) in relation to these theories. Theoretical frameworks relevant to the present study will also be presented through the following sub-sections. The relevance of the chosen frameworks is explained in relation the present study.

### **4.1.1 Positioning volunteer tourism within the broader tourism industry**

This sub-section briefly outlines the concept of volunteer tourism in relation to the broader tourism industry. Volunteer tourism is generally understood as a niche within the broader tourism industry (Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Butcher & Smith, 2010). However, due to the rapid expansion in number of volunteer tourism organisations and the dispersed character of these organisations and the volunteer tourism programmes they offer, Callanan and Thomas (2005) also refer to volunteer tourism as a ‘mass niche’. Further, volunteer tourism is often referred to as alternative tourism, signifying its distinction from mass tourism and the traditional two to three week packaged vacation tour (Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Wearing & McGehee, 2013). As outlined by Callanan and Thomas (2005), other categorisations exist that seek to define volunteer tourism; these include “charity tourism, responsible tourism, moral tourism, eco-tourism, cultural tourism, social tourism [and] serious leisure” (p. 185). The majority of the above categorisations also apply to the European Voluntary Service (EVS) as outlined in the introductory chapters.

### **4.1.2 Organisations and types of volunteer tourism programmes**

Generally volunteer tourism literature directs its attention to three main stakeholders. These stakeholders represent the sending and hosting organisations, the volunteer tourists and the host communities. These are all actors that are affected by the volunteer tourism activity (Lyons, Hanley, Wearing & Neil, 2013; Taplin, Dredge & Scherrer, 2014). This sub-section discusses the dominant deliberations within academic literature in regards to volunteer tourism sending organisations (organisations promoting and sending young people to volunteer tourism projects abroad) and volunteer tourism programme characteristics. Further, the European Voluntary Service (EVS) is

compared and contrasted to these deliberations, in order to identify where the EVS differs and where it aligns with the current literature.

Academic investigations of the volunteer tourism phenomenon has especially during the last fifteen to twenty years seen a great increase in discussions around the commercialisation of volunteer tourism activity (Wearing, 2001; Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Lyons, Hanley, Wearing & Neil, 2011; Tomazos & Butler, 2009). Understandably, the focus on the commercial aspect has been triggered by a general increase in the number of commercially run volunteer tourism organisations (Guttentag, 2009; Tomazos, 2012). This development is in general opposition to the European Voluntary Service. Already in 1993, the European Commission emphasised the need for support to non-commercial and not-for-profit Non-Governmental Organisations (Horak & Weber, 2000). The literature portrays both positive and negative aspects of the rapid increase in volunteer tourism (VT) organisations. Current accounts on the state of the volunteer tourism sector tend to be more pessimistic in relation to the programmes offered by VT sending organisations. However, these accounts only have commercial volunteer tourism as their frame of reference (Lyons, Hanley, Wearing & Neil, 2011). Thus, the author of the present research argues that current accounts on the state of volunteer tourism do not fully embrace the entirety of characteristics involved in the volunteer tourism sector.

Due to the ambiguous nature of the volunteer tourism concept, it is in the opinions of Callanan and Thomas (2005),

“appropriate to deconstruct the concept based on a number of factors: the duration of the participant’s visit, the extent of involvement in a particular project (from passive to active), the skills/qualifications of the participant with reference to the project itself and the extent to which the project focuses on self-development and/or the altruistic contribution of the experience to the local community” (p. 196).

In this way, Callanan and Thomas (2005) classify volunteer tourism into three main categories, *shallow*, *intermediate* and *deep* volunteer tourism (VT). Further, Callanan and Thomas (2005) divide their framework into two schemes; one representing the volunteer’s motivations and expectations, and the other expressing the characteristics of the volunteer projects offered by the VT organisations. In the formation of their framework, it is clear that Callanan and Thomas (2005)

question the real value of the *shallow* short-term VT projects that focus more on the specific characteristics of the VT project destination rather than the content of the VT project and its value to the local community. Further, the *shallow* VT project places emphasis on the experience and the opportunity for the volunteer to gain skills useful in for instance the endeavour to obtain academic credit. Thereby, Callanan and Thomas (2005) describe the *deep* VT project as being characterised by altruism, whereas the *shallow* VT project is centred on the volunteer tourist's self-development. According to Callanan and Thomas (2005), the nature of the *deep* VT project promotes "cultural immersion, intrinsic rewards and reciprocal relationships" (p. 198). Although Callanan and Thomas (2005) emphasise that short-term projects might be more appropriate for some forms of volunteer work, they generally suggest a more positive attitude towards long-term VT projects that has the potential of being more valuable to the volunteer and the host community. Further, Callanan and Thomas (2005) ask the question whether or not "explicit criteria for skills and experience [should] be used more extensively (...) [by organisations dealing with volunteer tourism]" (p. 199). However, as pointed out in the introductory chapters of the present research, it is in the very nature of the European Voluntary Service (EVS) to provide young people with the access to the programme no matter their educational and practical abilities. Still, the EVS represents a regulated programme in the sense that all organisations participating in the programme need to be accredited (European Commission, 2014(a)). Of other aspects involved in the conceptual framework presented by Callanan and Thomas (2005) include "the degree of flexibility and choice for volunteers [concerning the duration of the VT project]" (p. 198), and the way in which the VT project is targeted the volunteer. In other words, do projects mostly focus on the volunteer's self-interest or do the projects emphasise the actual contribution of the volunteer (ibid.). Although their review of the state of the volunteer tourism sector involves commercial volunteer tourism, Callanan and Thomas (2005) provide a framework for classification of volunteer tourist programmes that can be applied to both commercial and non-commercial contexts. Further, their thorough review of VT projects and organisations posted to the volunteer tourism database Go Abroad.com displays projects both within and outside of Europe. Therefore, the framework can also be applied to the EVS. Furthermore, the framework is considered appropriate for the purpose of the present study, as it takes into consideration both the VT project and destination. Still, the vast majority of the VT projects in Callanan and Thomas (2005) investigations are taking place in the *Global South* (ibid.).

In his investigations of commercial VT organisations, Keese (2011) disclose VT organisations' dual relationship to the character of the VT programme. Thus, the VT organisations under examination in Keese (2011) have certain criteria for the placement of their projects; these criteria involve on the one hand the level of need for aid at the project location, while on the other hand ensuring that the project destination is of interest to potential volunteers. As argued by Keese (2011),

“NGOs have traditionally relied on donations and grants from individuals, foundations, governments and multi-lateral organisations to fund their work. However, the primary source of funds for the volunteer-tourism NGO is the volunteer” (p. 260).

Therefore, Keese (2011) further argue that the “international volunteer NGO needs a saleable product, which is the consumer experience, and it must market this product to the consumer – the volunteer” (p. 260). On the contrary, the European Voluntary Service (EVS) as investigated in the present research represents a government funded volunteer tourism programme. As a result, more than perceiving the volunteer as a consumer of a product, through the EVS the volunteer can be understood as an asset in the European Commission's aim to “develop solidarity, mutual understanding and tolerance among young people” (European Commission, 2015(b), para. 3).

Other dominant researchers within recent academic literature on volunteer tourism tend to hold a negative perspective on VT projects focusing on the volunteer's self-interest. As emphasised earlier in this chapter, these critical accounts of volunteer tourism are set in a commercial context. Similar to Callanan and Thomas (2005), Lyons, Hanley, Wearing and Neil (2011) maintain a critique towards the VT projects focusing mostly on the volunteer's self-interest in relation to the gaining of skills and competencies useful for obtaining future career goals. Thereby, the altruistic perspective on the actual benefits of VT projects to local communities receives less attention in the promotion of VT projects (Lyons, Hanley, Wearing and Neil, 2011). However, as opposed to the investigations of volunteer tourism provided by Lyons, Hanley, Wearing and Neil (2011) and others (Guttentag, 2009; Wearing & McGehee, 2013), the European Voluntary Service (EVS) is non-commercial. For that reason, the author of the present study argues for a more nuanced view on volunteer tourism projects. In addition, the author of the present study maintain that there exists a gap in the literature concerning non-commercial government-funded volunteer tourism programmes.

Nevertheless, Pantea (2012) delivers a revitalising examination of volunteer tourism, as she explores the role of non-formal learning within the European Voluntary Service (EVS). Steering away from the vast and often narrow-minded literature on commercial volunteer tourism, Pantea (2012) analyses “how (...) [the European Voluntary Service] experience is intersecting (...) [the volunteers’] learning trajectories” (p. 49). Taking its point of departure in “long-term cross-border volunteering in Romania” (p. 49), Pantea’s (2012) analysis seeks a comprehension of the differing expectations and notions of volunteering as seen from the perspectives of international EVS volunteers and EVS host organisations in Romania. Albeit not focusing on commercial volunteer tourism, Pantea’s (2012) examination does briefly touch upon the distinction between a *charity-based model* and an *enterprise/self-reflective* type of volunteering that is often linked with commercial volunteer tourism. Referring to several scholars within volunteering (Graff, 2002; Hustinx and Lammertyn, 2000, 2004; Musick and Wilson, 2008), Pantea (2012) defines the *charity-based model* within cross-border volunteering as “long-term, open-ended, highly committed volunteering, (arguably) motivated by altruism” (p. 56), whereas the *enterprise/self-reflective* type of volunteering is characterised by the,

“episodic, self-reflective, need-based volunteering that is not based on the commitment to the organisation and is also motivated by self-improvement and the acquisition of job skills” (ibid.).

Pantea (2012) situates the EVS within the *charity-based model*, although the programme also has several characteristics in common with the *enterprise/self-reflective* type of volunteering. The *Youthpass* that as explained in the introductory chapters focuses on the individual volunteer’s reflection upon learning outcomes, is what links the EVS to the *enterprise/self-reflective* type of volunteering (ibid.). On the other hand, as the EVS projects are typically long-term, this also forces the volunteer to stay more committed to the volunteer project and the hosting organisation. Although the study by Pantea (2012) does represent an alternative to the focus on the commercialisation of volunteer tourism, such studies are sparse within academic literature.

#### **4.1.3 Volunteers and the volunteer tourism experience**

Whereas the previous sub-section had its focus on the characteristics of volunteer tourist programmes and organisations, this sub-section draws its attention to the volunteer tourists.

Much academic literature on the characteristics of volunteer tourists concentrate its focus on the motivations for participation in volunteer tourism (VT) projects (Wearing & McGehee, 2013; Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Grimm & Needham, 2012). The exploration of motivations for volunteer tourism is of importance to the present dissertation, since the uncovering of the volunteers' motivations for European Voluntary Service (EVS) participation represents a significant aspect in the comprehension of the choice and level of importance between the EVS project and destination. Numerous frameworks on the motivations for volunteer tourism engagement have been developed. For the purpose of the present study, the conceptual framework for volunteer tourists developed by Callanan and Thomas (2005) is considered suitable due to its consideration of both VT project and destination. Alike their conceptual model on VT projects, Callanan and Thomas (2005) classify volunteer tourists within the *shallow-intermediate-deep* continuum. Also similar to the framework for the VT projects, the volunteer tourist framework includes six categories that based on motivations for volunteering situates the volunteer within the *shallow-intermediate-deep* continuum. The categories include,

“Importance of the destination, duration of participation, focus of experience: altruistic v. self-interest, skills/qualifications of participants, active/passive participation, level of contribution to locals” (Callanan & Thomas, 2005, p. 197).

Thus, the *deep* volunteer tourist for instance focuses more on the choice of project rather than choice of destination; altruistic motives are of greater importance than self-interest motives; the volunteer is searching for a project, which typically has a duration of no less than six month. At the other end of the continuum is the *shallow* volunteer tourist. For the *shallow* volunteer tourist, self-development through the gaining of skills and competencies and the destination are the prime motivators for participation in a VT project. In addition to the significance of the VT project destination, the offering of off-site trips is of great importance. Further, the VT project in which the *shallow* volunteer is taking part is typically short-term (less than two month). From the depiction of the *shallow* and the *deep* volunteer tourist follows that the *intermediate* volunteer tourist places equal focus on the VT project content and the destination in the choice of VT project (the content of the VT project is important but there is still time for holiday breaks used for exploring the destination) (Callanan & Thomas, 2005). Moreover, the length of the chosen VT project is two to four month, and the volunteer tourist “focuses both on altruistic and self-development motives” (Callanan and Thomas, 2005, p. 196).

Although the conceptual framework developed by Callanan and Thomas (2005) help explain some aspects of the volunteer tourist's choice between VT project and destination, there are still some gaps in the comprehension of the volunteer tourist's motivation for participation in VT projects. Opposite Callanan and Thomas (2005), Wearing (2001) delivers a more positive view in one of his earlier studies on volunteer tourists' motivations for their participation in VT projects. Albeit encouraging a code of conduct for commercial VT organisations, Wearing's (2001) early examination of volunteer tourism in "Volunteer tourism: experiences that make a difference" has a more positive view of the volunteer tourist's opportunity for the discovery of self and self-development. Based on interviews with volunteer tourists, Wearing (2001) develops seven motivation categories for volunteer tourism:

- **Altruism:** The desire to do good and give something back. The desire to help others.
- **Travel/adventure:** The desire for exploring new places and meeting new people
- **Personal growth:** "related to the participant's wish to seek growth and learning on a professional level. (...) [Includes] the opportunity for cultural exchange or learning along with professional interests" (p. 67).
- **Cultural exchange/learning:** Experiencing the local community together with other international volunteer tourists.
- **Professional development:** The desire to gain experience within a specific field of interest.
- **The individual programme itself:** "An indication that it was the structure of the programme (...) which generated interest" (p.69).
- **'right time, right place':** "A range of personal and social factors (...) [leading] volunteers to be believe it 'was the right thing for them'" (p. 69).

(Adapted from Wearing, 2001)

Wearing (2001) emphasises that often the answers given by volunteer tourists are complex and thereby fit several motivation categories. Following on from the above review and discussion of volunteer tourists' motivations for participation in VT projects, the next section discusses literature and theories on destination image relevant to the present study.

## **4.2 Destination image formation**

A plethora of studies exist on the subject of destination image formation. Nonetheless, little effort has been done to identify the role of destination image formation in a volunteer tourism context. As explicated in the introduction to this chapter, this second section of the literature review provides a discussion of the various attributes and components that help create a destination's image, while exploring the concept of destination image as a process. Throughout the chapter, the theories discussed are placed in connection with the European Voluntary Service (EVS).

### **4.2.1 The multifaceted character of destination image formation**

Before providing a discussion on the various attributes and components involved in the process of destination image formation, first it is helpful to approach an understanding of the destination image concept. Various scholars have attempted to define the concept of destination image. Still, there exists no universally agreed upon definition. As highlighted by Gallarza et al. (2002), the reason for the missing universal agreement stems from the fact that “[d]efinitions are as many as authors interested in conceptualising it” (p. 68). Therefore, after their investigations of more than 30 academic articles, Gallarza et al. (2002) state that “the conceptual delimitation of destination's image is not unequivocal” (p. 68). Nevertheless, some similarities do occur, and based on the descriptive words often attached to the concept, destination image could be defined as the sum of ideas, beliefs, perceptions and impressions that a person holds of a destination. Thus, the definitions given by Crompton (1979) and Chen and Tsai (2007) respectively inspire the present study:

“An image may be defined as the sum of ideas, beliefs and impressions that a person has of a destination” (p. 18).

“Destination image is defined as an individual's mental representation of knowledge (beliefs), feelings and overall perception of a particular destination.” (Chen & Tsai, 2007, p. 1116).

Although acknowledging that ideas, perceptions, beliefs and impressions are subjective and therefore unique to each individual, the present study also recognises that there every so often might occur similarities between the ways in which volunteer tourists form their destination images through their participation in the European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme. This leads us on to the theoretical discussion about the various dimensions involved in the process of destination image formation.

Gallarza et al. (2002) separate academic investigations of the destination image formation concept into two main streams: the *static* and the *dynamic*. Whereas the *static* approach to destination image formation places emphasis on structural relationships between a destination's image and other constructs within tourism consumer studies such as motivation, satisfaction and destination choice, the *dynamic* approach explores the process and structure of destination image itself (ibid.). The *static* approach has also been referred to as behavioural studies. Such studies are characterised by the measurement of the interrelations between destination image and other constructs. Moreover, these investigations make use of quantitative approaches through statistical modelling techniques (Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010). While the present research does not rely on such measurements through statistical modelling of the above-mentioned interrelations, the study has its focus on the process and phases involved in destination image formation. Thus, as explained in the methodology chapter, the present research makes use of an exploratory rather than confirmatory technique. Thereby, this study is more closely situated to Gallarza et al.'s (2002) *dynamic* approach. Before delving into some of the different frameworks for the process of destination image formation, it is important to mention some of the theoretical deliberations on the various aspects involved in the process of destination image formation. Due to the array of discussions on the aspects included in destination image formation, Gallarza et al. (2002) summarise these discussions in a model that emphasises the complex, multiple, relativistic and dynamic nature of the destination image concept.

As stated by Gallarza et al. (2002), “[a] ‘complex’ concept is one which allows for more than one interpretation or whose comprehension lacks a unique meaning” (p. 68). For instance, there is no consensus on whether a destination is defined as a country (Crompton, 1979; Tapachai & Waryszak, 2000; Sun, Ryan & Pan, 2015), city (Moon et al., 2011; Hunter, 2012), an area (Lee, 2009), etc. To some authors, destination image refers to several of the above-mentioned objects (Crompton, 1979). The present study considers multiple objects within destination image; these are cities, local areas, countries and regions. Neither is there any agreement on the components forming the destination image construct (Gallarza et al., 2002). Beerli and Martín (2004) and Seyhmus Baloglu (2000) among others mention the *cognitive* and *affective* image components, while Tasci et al. (2007) and King et al. (2015) among others also include the *conative* component. While the *cognitive* component within destination image formation represents what is known or beliefs about

the destination (King et al., 2015; Tasci et al., 2007), the *affective* component is “defined by the positive or negative feelings elicited by a destination” (King et al., 2015, p. 7), or “how we feel about what we know” (Tasci et al., 2007, p. 199). The *conative* component relates to how we act based on the *cognitive* and *affective* components (Tasci et al., 2007). The present dissertation makes use of the *cognitive* and *affective* components, as it investigates the EVS participants’ knowledge, beliefs and feelings about their EVS destinations during pre-visit, visit and post volunteering phases. The *conative* component is explored through an understanding of the EVS participants’ reactions towards their cognitive and affective evaluations. Another aspect in the complexity of destination image formation is that the formation can be understood both as a collection of *uni-personal* and *collective* impressions (Gallarza et al., 2002). As clarified by Gallarza et al. (2002), “[t]he first focus would generally differentiate image as opposed to the stereotype, this being understood as a collective image” (p. 69).

As a multiple character construct, destination image is considered both attribute-based and holistic. In other words, a destination’s image is determined by several attributes that together form a holistic image. (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993; Gallarza et al., 2002). With inspiration from Echtner and Ritchie (1991, 1993), a destination’s image in the present case study include evaluations of attributes such as the destination’s scenery, the people, culture, etc. that together form the holistic atmosphere of the destination/place (familiar to own country or exotic and different). A second aspect that illustrates the multiplicity of the destination image construct stems from its formation. As stated by Gallarza et al. (2002), “[t]he image, as an overall output, comes from a sequence of stages where several elements and factors influence and interrelate” (p. 70). This will be discussed further in the following sub-section on the process of destination image formation.

A third feature in Gallarza et al.’s (2002) discussion on the destination image concept involves the relativistic nature of the destination image construct. As argued by Gallarza et al. (2002):

“A concept is relativistic when it is simultaneously subjective (changes from person to person) and comparative (involves perceptions among various objects). The subjective character of image is universally acknowledged. Image always corresponds to an interiorization of some perceptions, and not everyone has the same perceptions. (...) As such, TDI [tourist destination image] refers to perceptions of tourists in a destination and these correspond to the perceived contribution of the different tourism services to be found there” (p. 71).

In the context of the present research project, the researcher contend that destination image is formed by the services delivered to the participants for their passive absorption. Instead, the researcher of the present study proclaim the relevance of the activities at the destination in the process of destination image formation. However, considering the relativistic nature of the destination image construct is important to the present study, as it emphasises the differences in the EVS volunteers' social backgrounds and previous travel experiences, as well as differences in the volunteer activities in which the EVS volunteers are involved.

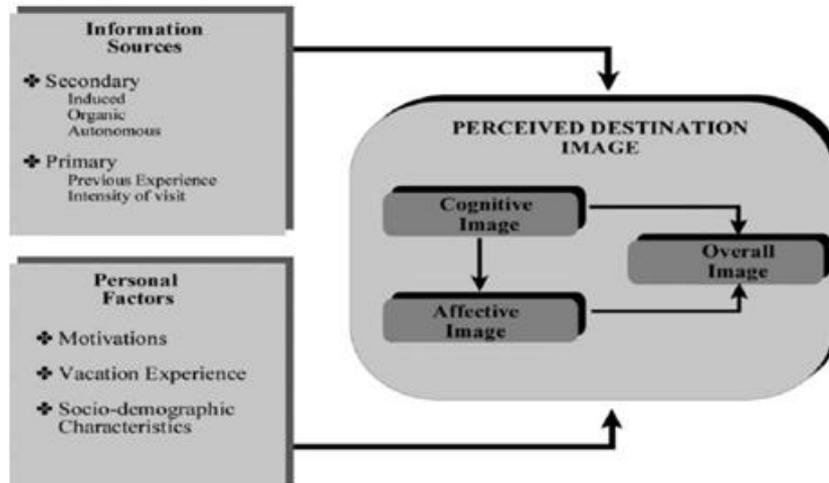
The fourth and final point in Gallarza et al.'s (2002) model/framework embodies the dynamic nature of the destination image construct. As explained by Gallarza et al. (2002), the destination image construct is bound by *time*. In other words, the individual tourist's image of a destination is constructed through a process, and the image of a destination prior to a visit will therefore change during and after the visit. Nevertheless, as demonstrated by Kim and Chen (2015), the change in destination image is not always straightforward. At times, the individual tourist's image of a destination prior to a visit might not have changed drastically post-visit. Occasionally, the tourist's image of a destination prior to visit in comparison to post-visit might not at all change (Kim & Chen, 2015). This is discussed further in the following sub-section on the process of the destination image formation. According to Gallarza et al. (2002), *space* is another aspect that makes the destination image construct dynamic. As stated by Gallarza et al. (2002), the aspect of *space* "involves (...) [the destination image formation's] subjective character (affects where respondents are)" (p. 72). This view is in accordance with a study conducted by Crompton already in 1979, where he investigated the influence of distance on a destination's image. In his study of Mexico as a potential vacation destination for American students across the US, Crompton (1979) revealed that the individual student's image of Mexico as a tourist destination changed in relation to the student's physical distance from Mexico. Although Crompton's (1979) study represents a very specific example, the relevance of destination proximity is confirmed by other studies on destination image (Gartner, 1993(a); Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010). With reference to Gartner (1993(a)), Stepchenkova and Mills (2010) state that "markets that are closer to the destination have more detailed images than geographically distant markets: the greater the distance, the more distorted the reality becomes" (p. 578). Nonetheless, it is in the opinion of the researcher that the notion of proximity is vague, and it seems there is no clear comprehension of when a destination is near and

when it is distant. Nonetheless, the vagueness of the proximity aspect within destination image formation is exactly what makes it relevant within the present research project, since it begs to be explored in more detail.

In continuation of the above exploration and discussion of relevant theories on various destination image aspects, the following sub-section directs the attention towards the process of destination image formation.

### 4.3 The process of destination image formation

Drawing inspiration from Gallarza et al. (2002), Beerli and Martín (2004) develop a model (Figure 1 below) to illustrate the multiple aspects involved in destination image formation. In their model, Beerli and Martín (2004) list information sources and personal factors as two aspects influencing the *cognitive* and *affective* components leading to the overall perceived image. The *cognitive* and *affective* components were introduced earlier in the present study. Information sources are separated into secondary and primary.



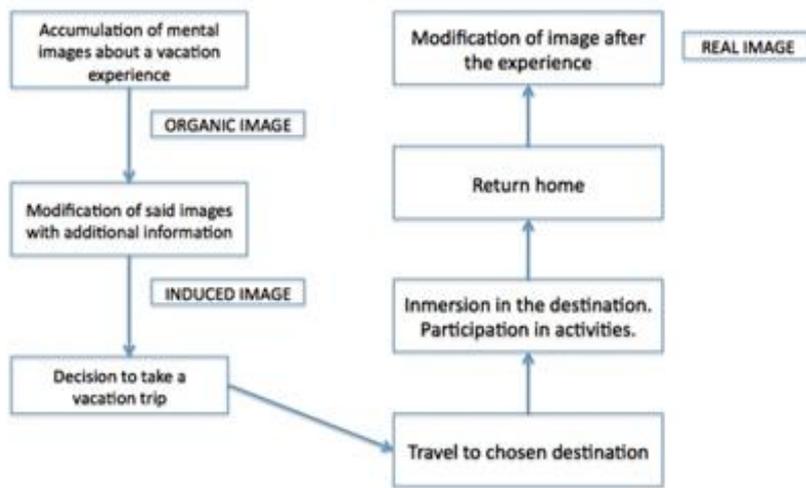
**Figure 1: Model of the formation of destination image (adopted from Beerli and Marin, 2004, p. 660)**

With reference to Gartner (1993(b)), Beerli and Martín (2004) state that the information that affect the tourist can be *induced*, *organic* and/or *autonomous*. Gartner (1993(b)) separates the *induced* information into covert and overt *induced* information. The *overt induced* information stems from conventional advertising and promotional activities delivered by the relevant

institution(s) that is tour operators etc. (Beerli & Martín, 2004). In the case of the present study, this type of information and promotional activities about the EVS programme are typically delivered by the sending organisations AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE at for instance travel fairs and info-meetings and through the postings of travel blogs. However, the information and promotional activities delivered by the sending organisations are typically focused on the volunteer activities rather than the promotion of specific destinations (AFS Interkultur, 2015(f); Dansk ICYE, n.d.(b)). The promotion of specific destinations takes place in the project descriptions posted to the European Voluntary Service (EVS) project database (European Union, n.d.). The *covert induced* information can be found in for instance news articles (Gartner, 1993(b)). As commented by Beerli and Martín (2004), the *autonomous* secondary information sources include “mass-media broadcasting news, documentaries, films, television programs, etc. about (...) [a] place” (p. 661). *Organic* information is delivered when a person receives information from friends and relatives about their experiences at a specific destination. The *induced*, *organic* and *autonomous* information sources represent the information collected and received prior to the visit of a destination. The secondary information sources then form the tourist’s image of a destination prior to his/her travel.

As argued by Beerli and Martín (2004), the primary sources of information that comes with the tourist’s previous experience/visit, and the intensity of that experience/visit often form a more complex destination image. Personal factors include the tourist’s motivations, vacation experience and socio-demographic characteristics (Beerli & Martín, 2004). We have already touched upon motivations in the above section on the volunteer tourist. According to Vogt and Andereck (2003), aspects such as the length of visit and the activities involved in the actual travel experience help form the tourist’s image of a destination. This is highly relevant in relation to the present study of EVS volunteers, since the EVS projects are characterised as high intensity experiences, typically long-term and with a high degree of involvement with the locals. In combination with the intensity of previous travel experience, the above-mentioned aspects help form the tourist’s post-experience destination image (Beerli & Martín, 2004).

While Beerli and Martín's (2004) model provides a valuable overview on both the process of image formation and the image aspects within this formation, Gunn (1988) delivers a model (figure 2) that is more inclusive in relation to the different phases involved in the process of destination image formation. Gunn (1988) separates the process of destination image formation into seven stages, or phases, as displayed in figure 2. It will be noticed that the different phases comprise the



Gunn's Model of Leisure Travel, 1988, Gunn, C. (1988) *Vacationscape. Designing Tourist Regions*. Second edition. New York: V. N. Reinhold

**Figure 2**

various destination image aspects mentioned by Beerli and Martín (2004). While Gunn's (1988) model is useful for a comprehension of destination image formation as a continuous process, it is in the opinion of the researcher of the present research project that this process does not always fit practice. In the case of the present research project, rather than choosing an attractive destination, the EVS volunteer might choose to focus solely on the attractiveness of the volunteer project. Still, Gunn's model is relevant to the present study, as it provides a useful theoretical framework for the development of a new framework based on the study of EVS volunteers' destination images of EVS project destinations in the pre-visit, visit and post-volunteering phases. Fakeye and Crompton (1991) develop a model and framework similar to that of Gunn (1988). Nevertheless, Fakeye and Crompton (1991) extend the model by adding the "[e]valuation of destinations' benefits and images [to the post-visit phase]" (p. 11). Thus, the post-visit phase also involves an evaluation of the visited destination in relation to other destinations (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991).

In order to provide a more comprehensive model of the process of destination image formation, Kim and Chen (2015) refine Gunn's (1988) model. Kim and Chen (2015) applies a schema-driven approach to the development of a holistic model on the process of destination image formation. As explained by Kim and Chen (2015), a schema-driven process is to be understood as "a mental representation of a certain object [that] is built through one's whole life, wherein one grows up with

the process to add more and more information to that schema” (p. 9). In the context of destination image, tourists will conscious or unconscious develop their own mental images of certain destinations (Kim & Chen, 2015). Based on the different information sources (*induced, organic* and *autonomous*) and personal factors (motivations, vacation experience and socio-demographic characteristics) mentioned earlier in this sub-section, it follows that the tourist will pay more attention to some destinations in comparison to others. As argued by Kim and Chen (2015), the different schemas developed in the mind of the tourist will help cultivate the motivation for visiting some destinations rather than others. The tourist’s motivation is what drives him or her to engage in an active information search of which Kim and Chen (2015) denote the *data-driven process*. Based on the information gathered, the individual’s destination schema is being modified. Hereof follows the decision whether or not to visit the given destination(s) of interest (*conative* component). The decision to visit the destination of interest is followed by an *experience-driven process*. According to Kim and Chen’s (2015) model, the tourist will experience either one of the following outcomes while at the destination: congruity, moderate incongruity or extreme incongruity between the actual image(s) as experienced at the destination and the *organic* and *induced* image(s) prior to departure. This process will then lead to an identical, moderately transformed or mainly transformed image on return from the destination (Kim & Chen, 2015). Within the setting of the present research project, Kim and Chen’s (2015) model and framework is useful for gaining an understanding of the EVS volunteers’ changes in perceptions (images) of their project destinations.

With the above section on destination image in mind, the following presents a theoretical discussion of the concept of *worldmaking* and the peace proposition within volunteer tourism. Within this discussion, the interrelationship between *worldmaking* and destination image is deliberated in a volunteer tourism context.

#### **4.4 Worldmaking and the peace proposition within volunteer tourism**

The need for a different perspective on tourism and theories within tourism studies has been vividly discussed during the last fifteen to twenty years (Meethan, 2002; Hollinshead, 2007; Hollinshead, Ateljevic & Ali, 2009; Pernecky, 2010). Dredge and Schott (2013) emphasise the need to place tourism studies in a different context than that focusing on the commercial and market-driven perspectives. As argued by Dredge and Schott (2013), there is a need for a better understanding and development of tourism as a potential contributor to the changing of the world for the better. Thus,

Dredge and Schott (2013) embrace “the idea that tourism is a world-making activity, with the potential to promote tolerance, peace, alleviate poverty (...) [and] address issues of equity and disempowerment” (p. 374). Referring to Meethan (2002), Hollinshead (2007) emphasises that too often tourism has been discussed as a commoditized activity. We saw earlier in this chapter of the present study, how volunteer tourism to an increasing extent is studied as an industry. Thereby, an increasing number of studies also present pessimistic views on volunteer tourism as commoditized (Wearing, 2001; Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Lyons, Hanley, Wearing & Neil, 2011; Tomazos & Butler, 2009). Discussing the concept of *worldmaking* enables a turn away from the above-mentioned hegemonic conceptions within volunteer tourism and tourism studies in general.

Hollinshead (2009) refers to the notion of *worldmaking* as the individual’s conscious or unconscious acceptance of versions of the world and the denial of other versions. From this perspective, it follows that the world is constructed through various representations. Thereby, places/destinations are also constructed through sets of hegemonic representations (Hollinshead, Ateljevic & Ali, 2009). Hollinshead (2007), Hollinshead, Ateljevic and Ali (2009), and Pernecky (2010) refer to the concept of *worldmaking* as involving tourism’s ability to function as an agent of change, capable of making, re-making and de-making places/destinations. Thus, although not being the focus of the present dissertation, the notion of *worldmaking* is relevant in relation to the study of EVS volunteers, as it provides a frame for exploring how the EVS programme provides the volunteers with the opportunity for challenging hegemonic destination images and prejudices. Thus, the concept of *worldmaking* is important when considering the successful achievement of the overall aim of the EVS programme that is to “develop solidarity, mutual understanding and tolerance among young people” (European Commission, 2015(b), para. 3). In this way, this study challenge the current hegemonic focus on volunteer tourism as a commoditized industry activity.

## **4.5 Chapter conclusion**

In summary, a number of differences were found between the European Voluntary Service (EVS) and the dominant representations of volunteer tourism in literature. The dominant depictions of the volunteer tourism sector have moved from a positive focus on the sector as an alternative to mass tourism to a pessimistic view highlighting the commoditization of volunteer tourism. Moreover, it seems the vast majority of academic literature focuses on volunteer tourism in developing countries of the global south. Little research has been conducted on volunteer tourism in a European

perspective. In contrast to the dominant academic literature, the European Voluntary Service is non-commercial and government-funded. Although some EVS projects do take place outside of Europe, the majority of projects are situated within Europe.

The multifaceted character of destination image formation was deliberated through an understanding of the concept's complex, multiple, relativistic and dynamic nature. It was found that personal aspects (travel motivation, previous travel experience and socio-demographic characteristics) as well as information sources (recommendations from friends and relatives, promotional activities, etc.) were among the aspects included in destination image formation prior to the travel experience. A more complex destination image is formed after the experience at the destination.

A number of relevant frameworks and their interrelations, strengths and weaknesses were discussed in relation to the present study of the EVS programme and its volunteers. Callanan and Thomas (2005) provide a useful framework for the present research project, as they combine volunteer project characteristics and the volunteers' motivations for engaging in volunteer tourism. Further, the framework by Callanan and Thomas (2005) is suitable for the comprehension of sending organisations and volunteers weighing of the importance of VT project content and destination. Moreover, since motivation is one of the key components in the process of destination image formation, Callanan and Thomas' (2005) framework was considered valuable to the current study. Nevertheless, the framework delivered by Callanan and Thomas (2005) was not considered to embrace the entirety of volunteers' motivations. Therefore, Wearing's (2001) framework for volunteer tourism motivation was deemed relevant. Beerli and Martín's (2004) model/framework was thought to provide a thorough comprehension of the various aspects included in destination image formation. However, it was found necessary to further complement Beerli and Martín's (2004) model with the models/frameworks by Gunn (1988) and Fakeye and Crompton (1991), in order to understand the different phases within the process of destination image formation. Finally, the framework by Kim and Chen (2015) represented a valuable supplement to the frameworks by Beerli and Martín (2004), Gun (1988) and Fakeye and Crompton (1991), as it included the degree of change in the individual's image of a destination. No single framework was found to cover destination image within a volunteer tourism context. Therefore, it was found necessary to combine various models and frameworks in order to provide solid ground and a foundation for the

investigation of how volunteers form their destination images through their participation in the European Voluntary Service (EVS). The following analysis and case study will build on the frameworks explicated and discussed in the current chapter in order to develop a new framework for the EVS volunteers' processes of destination image formation.

Further, the concept of *worldmaking* was considered to open up for a discussion on new perspectives on volunteer tourism and destination image. Involving the individual's conscious or unconscious acceptance of versions of the world and the denial of other versions, the concept of *worldmaking* was included in order to focus more on the peace proposition within volunteer tourism rather than the commoditization of volunteer tourism.

## 5 Case analysis

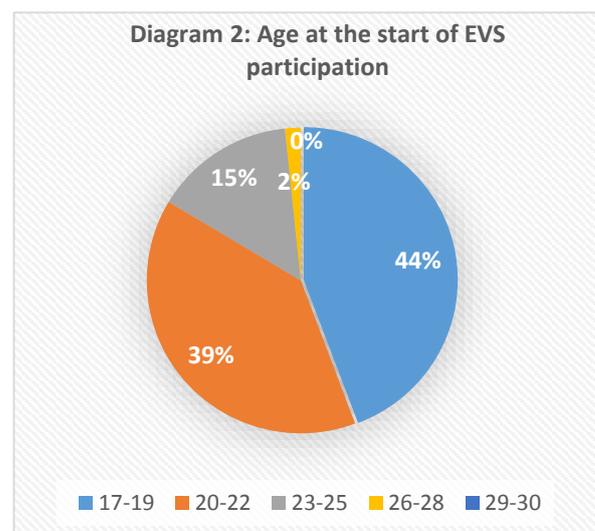
With the methodology, literature review and theory now established, this chapter focuses the attention towards the analysis of the data collected, in order to answer the research question of the present study. In accordance with the sequential data collection procedure as explained in the methodology chapter, the present chapter first presents and analyses the survey results (**first section**). Hereafter, an analysis of the ten interviews conducted between November 22<sup>nd</sup> and November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015, (Appendix 4a-4j) build on top of the analysis of the survey results (**second section**). Following the themes presented and discussed in the literature review, the following section is separated into sub-sections. Comparing and contrasting the survey results with the general population of Danish EVS volunteers, the **first part of the survey analysis** presents and discusses the survey results in regards to the general demographics of the EVS volunteers, the most popular destinations and the length of the EVS participants' volunteer projects. In addition, a brief overview will be given on some of the overall aims of the various volunteer projects in which the respondents participated. The **second part of the survey analysis** discusses the survey results in relation to the EVS volunteers' motivations for EVS participation, the cognitive and affective destination image aspects, and the EVS volunteers' changes in perceptions. Further, it will be explored whether or not changes occur within the survey results on motivations and destination image changes in relation to the EVS volunteers demographics, prior visit and previous volunteer experience.

Apart from building on the theories as discussed in the literature review, the present chapter will be open to the inclusion of theories not already explored. This process opens for a deductive as well as an inductive exploratory case study as also emphasised in the methodology chapter. Additionally, the inductive exploratory case study is formed by the development of a new framework for the process of destination image formation in a volunteer tourism context. An overview of the final framework for the process of destination image formation within a volunteer tourism context is presented in the conclusion that sums up the entire research project.

## 5.1 Survey findings

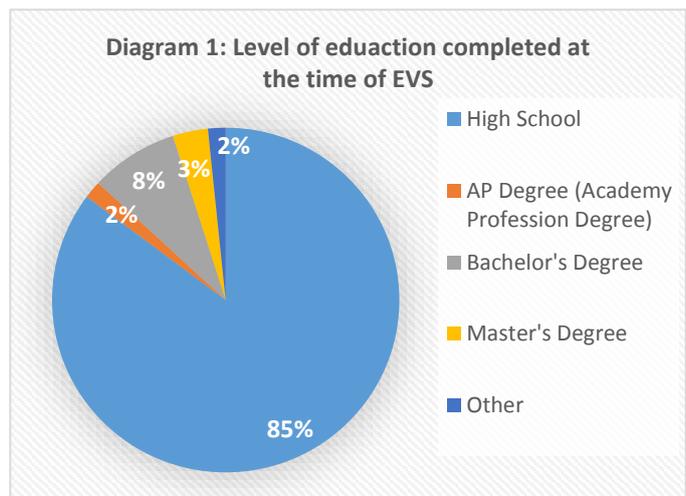
### 5.1.1 Volunteer demographics

Before delving into the respondents' (Danish former EVS volunteers) answers to the open-ended questions on motivations for EVS participation and changes in perceptions, it is appropriate to first investigate the degree to which the survey can be said to be representative of the general population of Danish EVS volunteers. The survey was sent to 158 previous EVS participants through the two Danish sending organisations AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE and 61 answers were returned. This leads to a response rate on 38.6%, which as emphasised in the methodology chapter was considered acceptable. Although not being able to provide exact statistics on every aspect concerning the general population of Danish EVS volunteers, the statistics provided by the two Danish sending organisations AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE do deliver some estimates. In relation to AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE's general statistics on their EVS programme participants, the following shows evident. The estimated average age for the EVS participants through AFS Interkultur shows that the majority of the participants are around the age of 19-20 years by the time they start at their EVS projects. Therefore, as emphasised by AFS Interkultur's EVS Coordinator Vibe Grønfeldt, the majority of EVS participants through AFS Interkultur start at their EVS projects right after or a



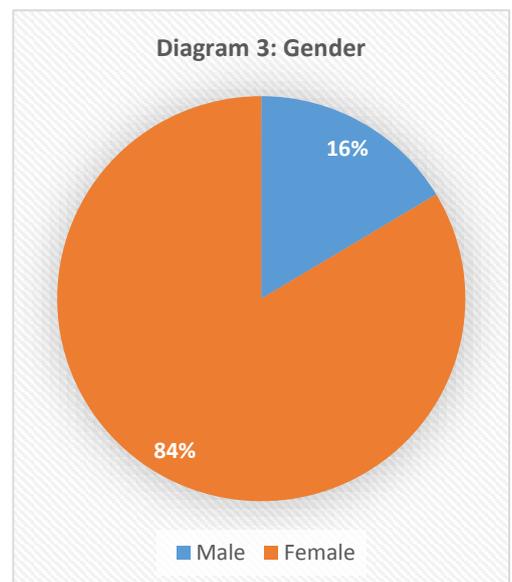
year after finished High School (gymnasium).

A smaller group have started higher education and have decided to take some time off from their studies. This general picture also shows in the survey within the present study, as 15 out of 18 (83%) of the EVS volunteers through AFS Interkultur state that they had completed High School by the time of their EVS participation. One had completed a Master's degree and two had



completed their Bachelor's degrees. According to Pia Lieberknecht, EVS Coordinator for Dansk ICYE, the vast majority of EVS participants through Dansk ICYE start at their volunteer projects at the age of 19-20 years. Further, the vast majority start at their EVS projects right after finished High School. This picture also shows evident in the survey, where 37 (86%) of the EVS volunteers through Dansk ICYE had finished High School by the time they started at their EVS projects. One had finished her AP degree (Academy Profession Degree), another her 10<sup>th</sup> grade, three EVS volunteers started after end Bachelor's degree and one after finished Master's degree. The overall distribution of EVS volunteers within the survey in relation to age and education is displayed in diagrams 1 and 2. In accordance with the statistics received from AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE, the vast majority of Danish EVS volunteers (52 of 61, 85%) took part in an EVS project after finished High School, and a great majority of the volunteers (51 of 61, 83%) were at the at the age of 17-22. With the statistics received from AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE, it seems that only very few are at the age of 17-18 at the start of an EVS project.

The percentage of Danish male and female EVS volunteers is also unequally distributed. The statistics received from AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE confirm the results within the survey of the present study. The survey received responses from 51 female (84%) and 10 male (16%) Danish former EVS volunteers. According to the statistics received from AFS Interkultur on the general population of their EVS participants between the years of

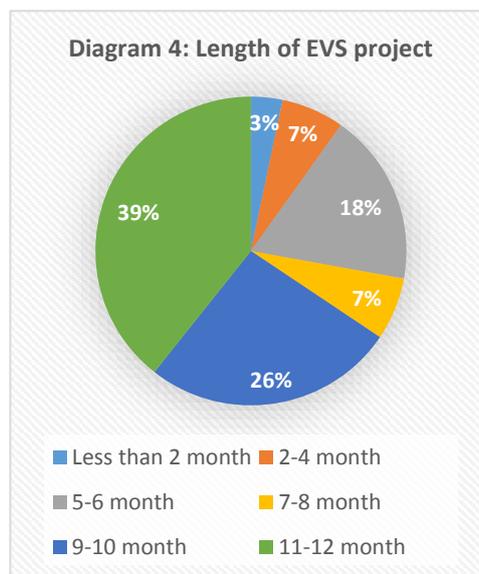


2012 and 2015, 8 participants (25%) are male and 24 (75%) female. Within the survey, 14 (78%) EVS participants through AFS Interkultur are female and 4 (22%) are male. Further, Dansk ICYE confirm this unequal distribution, as it is emphasised by EVS Coordinator Pia Lieberknecht that the vast majority of their EVS participants are female.

Based on the above statistics, although with a few exceptions, the European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme seems to attract mostly females in their late teens and beginning of their twenties who have just finished High School. Although the EVS programme has as its goal to include all socio-demographic layers of society, the above statistics show that in a Danish context, the EVS programme goal is not fully achieved.

### 5.1.2 Project characteristics

Generally, the Danish EVS participants' volunteer projects can be characterised as long-term within Callanan and Thomas' (2005) volunteer tourism framework, thereby giving the volunteer the opportunity for emerging him/herself into the local culture of the host community. According to Dansk ICYE's EVS Coordinator Pia Lieberknecht, the average length of their EVS participants' volunteer projects is 9-10 months. According to AFS Interkultur's EVS Coordinator Vibe Grønfeldt, most of the EVS projects last for about 9-12 months. A smaller group of participants work on projects lasting 3-6 months. However, as Grønfeldt explains, the number of projects lasting less than 6 months is limited. As illustrated in diagram 4, the majority (44 of 61, 72%) of the Danish EVS volunteers take part in projects lasting more than 6 months. Thus, the distribution between short-term and long-term EVS projects within the present survey is somewhat representative of the general population of Danish EVS volunteers.



The overall aims of the different EVS projects in which the 61 respondents (EVS volunteers) have participated span wide. A few of the aims and themes covered within the 61 respondents' EVS projects include work with children in a kindergarten, facilitation of activities in refugee camps, teaching children on various subjects (education on specific geographical areas, environment, etc.),

work with disabled people, work with troubled youth who has fallen out of the school or job system, coordination and marketing of an event (for instance artistic street festival), etc.

### 5.1.3 Programme preferences

The respondents within the survey cover a wide range of project destinations including Eastern and Western EU states (Programme Countries), EU neighbouring countries (Neighbouring Partner Countries: the Western Balkans), Southern Mediterranean and Eastern European countries (countries in the Middle East, Eastern European countries outside of the EU and North African countries: refer to the chapter on the introduction to the EVS) and Turkey. The following shows the survey results on the number of Danish EVS participants through AFS Interkultur distributed between different EVS project countries in the years 2012-2015. The survey results are put in relation to the general population of EVS participants through AFS Interkultur (numbers in **bold** represent the participants within the present study's survey):

- Spain 8 (**5**), Germany 5 (**4**), Armenia 4 (**2**), Austria 4 (**1**), France 2 (**1**), Romania 2 (**2**), Belgium 2 (**1**), Ireland 1 (**0**), Italy 1 (**1**), Latvia 1 (**0**), Greece 1 (**0**), Moldova 1 (**1**).

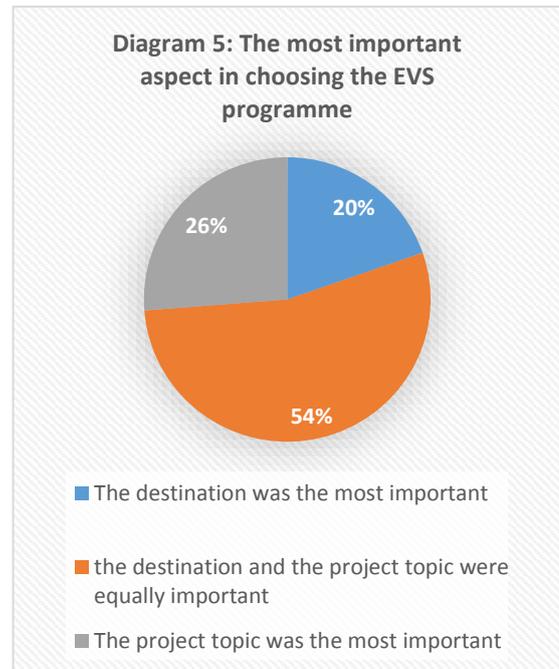
Noticeably, while no responses has been received from participants to Ireland, Latvia and Greece, EVS project participants to Austria are also under-represented in the survey. Additionally, although EVS Project Coordinator Pia Lieberknecht lists England as one of the most popular destinations, only 3 of the 43 respondents through Dansk ICYE did their EVS projects in England. Therefore, it seems that EVS participants to England are under-represented in the present survey. Still, England represents a popular destination within the survey, as 8 respondents mention England or Great Britain as the only destination of preference or the destination among other destinations of preference. Although Spain and France represent the most popular EVS project destinations, these are also the EVS member countries with the highest number of volunteer projects.<sup>7</sup> Within the survey, 14 and 9 respondents respectively mention Spain or France as the only destination of preference or the destination among other destinations of preference. Interestingly, 9 respondents did their EVS projects in Germany but only 6 respondents mention Germany as the only destination of preference or the destination among other destinations of preference. Thereby, Germany exceeds

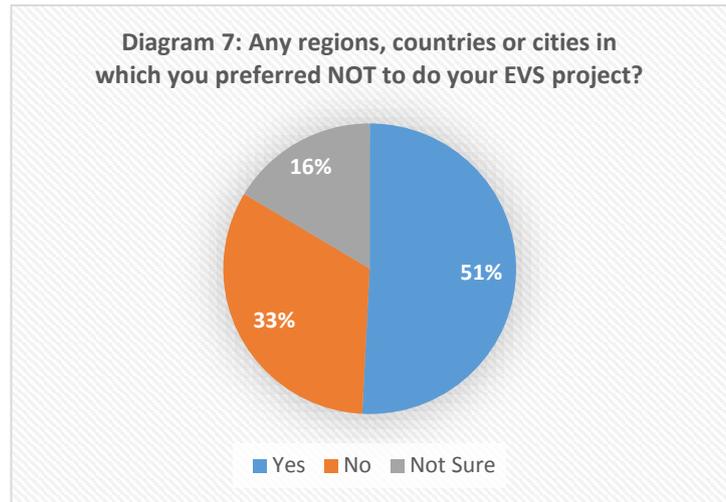
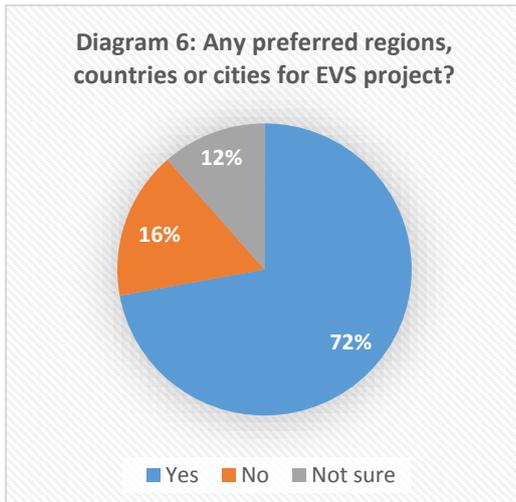
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<sup>7</sup> According to Pia Lieberknecht, EVS Project Coordinator for Dansk ICYE, and in accordance with the European Youth Portal database of European Voluntary Service accredited organisations (European Union, n.d.).

France in numbers of Danish EVS participants in the years 2012-2014. The four countries receiving the highest numbers of Danish EVS participants are Spain, Germany, France and Romania with 10, 9, 6 and 5 Danish participants respectively. Notably, although Poland represents one of the countries with the most EVS projects (European Union, n.d.), only one respondent went to Poland.

In relation to questions 15 and 16 on the destination preference, one of the respondents comments that she preferred not to do her EVS project in “Germany – because of the language but I ended up there and I loved it” (Appendix 2, respondent 15). This respondent also listed the project as the most important aspect in choosing her EVS programme. Thereby, she (Appendix 2, respondent 15) represents one among the 16 (26%) respondents as displayed in diagram 5 who stated that the project topic was the most important. A second respondent who went to Germany stated in the survey that she did not have any specific destinations of preference (Appendix 2, respondent 8). Moreover, she did not have any destinations in which she preferred not to do her EVS project. A third respondent was not sure whether she had any destinations of preference or any destinations in which she preferred not to do her project (Appendix 2, respondent 34). Both respondent 8 and 34 chose option 2 in question 17 in the survey stating, “The destination and the project topic were equally important”. Although 12 respondents (20%) chose the option “The destination was the most important”, it seems that Gunn’s (1988) model (refer to the literature review chapter within the present study) for the process of destination image formation needs revision, in order to be adapted to a volunteer tourism context. In other words, the choice of project destination seems not to always depend on the favourable image of a destination. This is further evident in question 12 (diagram 6 below) of the survey, where 10 (16%) and 7 (12%) respondents respectively answered “No” or “Not sure” to the question whether they had any preferred regions, countries or cities for their EVS projects. What is more, 20 (33%) and 10 (16%) respondents respectively answered “No” or “Not sure” to the question whether they had any regions, countries or cities in which they preferred not to do their EVS projects (diagram 7 below).





Still, the majority (44 respondents, 72%) stated that they had preferred destination(s) (regions, countries or cities), which shows that in the majority of cases the destination is not without importance. 12 (27%) of those 44 respondents who stated that they had preferred regions, countries or cities for their EVS projects, chose the option “No” to the answer whether the final destination was the first choice. One respondent (Appendix 2, respondent 26) stated that he was not sure whether he had any destination(s) of preference; still he mentioned that the final destination was not his first choice. On the other hand, this respondent also stated that the project topic was the most important when choosing his EVS programme. Another respondent (Appendix 2, respondent 23) stated that she did not have any destination(s) of preference; however, she also answered “No” to the question whether the final destination (country) was the first choice. When investigating the two above-mentioned respondents, it is clear that their perceptions about their final destinations changed for the better during their EVS projects, as they state:

“It completely changed. I got to explore a country I never imagined I would ever see. I fell in love with Romania and completely changed my perspective on Eastern Europe” (Appendix 2, respondent 23),

“Before I knew nothing about Romania. After, I loved the country” (Appendix 2, respondent 26)

Although it was discussed in the literature review of the present study how travel motivation was related to the formation of destination image, some of the answers to questions 15 and 16 demonstrate that sometimes the motivation for choosing an EVS destination is guided by matters of practicalities and not solely the destination’s image. While question 15 asks whether the

respondents had any destination(s) (regions, countries or cities) where they preferred not to do their volunteer projects, question 16 asks the respondent to state the destination(s) of which they did not prefer. 4 of the respondents (Appendix 2, respondents 6, 13, 38 and 55) specified that they did not want work on projects in countries where they did not have the opportunity to learn, improve or make use of a specific language (German, French or Spanish).

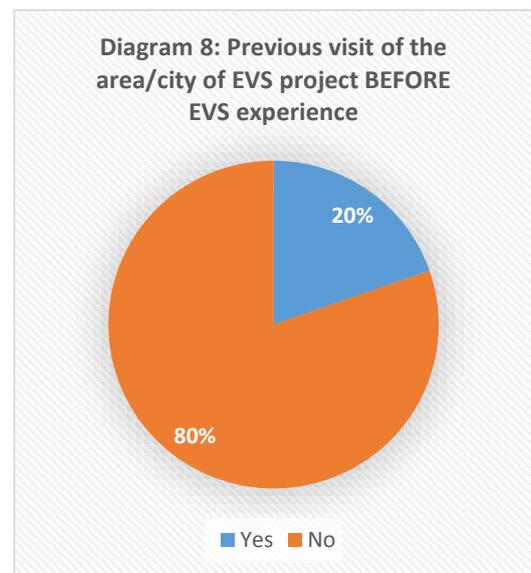
As illustrated in diagram 7 above, 31 respondents (51%) state that they had specific regions, countries or cities in which they preferred not to do their projects. The following demonstrates some of the most notable observations. Notably, 6 participants (Appendix 2, respondents 14, 25, 27, 28, 33 and 46) specifically mention Eastern Europe as an area/region where they were not interested in doing their projects. Although representing one of the most popular destinations with 9 Danish EVS volunteers, Germany is also mentioned by 4 respondents (Appendix 2, respondents 13, 20, 23 and 27) as a non-preferred destination. 2 respondents (Appendix 2, respondents 36 and 38) indicate that they did not want to work on their EVS projects outside of Spain, and 1 (Appendix 2, respondent 19) stated that she was not interested in any other destinations other than the area around Paris. In other words, these EVS volunteers only preferred the most popular destinations. The reasons for these choices are indicated to be due to the desire to improve in the French or Spanish language or simply because of the lack of language barriers.

In opposition, examples are also to be found on respondents who preferred to work on EVS projects not situated in the most popular destinations. Thus, 2 respondents (Appendix 2, respondents 10 and 32) mention Spain among the destinations not preferred and 2 mention Western Europe, thereby including England, France and Spain (Appendix 2, respondent 24 and 53). One EVS participant who went to Ukraine directly states, “I did not want to go where everybody else went, so countries like England, Spain and Italy was a no-go for me” (Appendix 2, respondent 18). Since only 2 EVS participants within the present survey went to Italy, it seems that Italy as a projects destination is either underrepresented or the participant might refer to the general popularity of Italy as a project destination for EVS volunteer across Europe. Another participant (Appendix 2, respondent 53) who went to Morocco specify that she wanted to live in a country with a culture radically different to that of the Danish. In other words, the participant already had a preconceived image of the destination as being very different. In this way, motivation as discussed in the literature review plays a role in the formation of a destination’s image. Nonetheless, all of the

6 above-mentioned respondents indicate that the project topic and the destination were equally important in their choice of EVS programme. However, the reasons for avoiding certain destinations are not always visible through the EVS volunteers' explanations of their motivations and change in perceptions/destination image while at the project destination. This will be further explored in the analysis of the ten in-depth interviews.

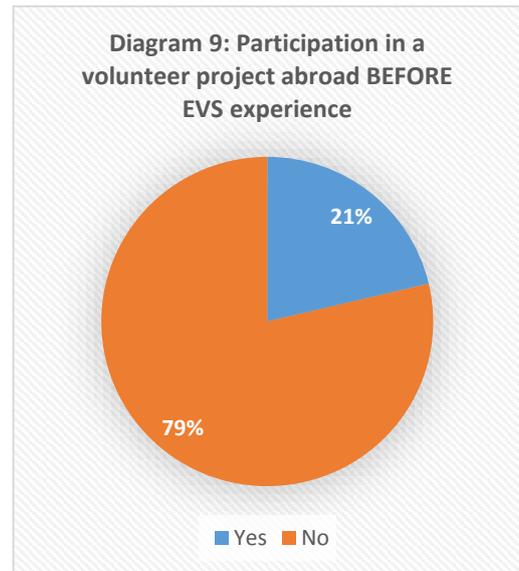
#### 5.1.4 Previous visit and volunteer project participation

As displayed in diagram 8, 12 (20%) of the respondents had previously visited the area/city of their EVS destinations. However, possibly due to their short visits, only few (3 respondents) state that their perceptions/image of their EVS destination only changed slightly or did not at all change. A larger number of the respondents (8) directly highlight that they achieved a deeper understanding and knowledge of the host country's people and/or culture, history and/or politics. For instance, one of the respondents who went to Malaga, Spain, states, "I have been to Spain a lot also before



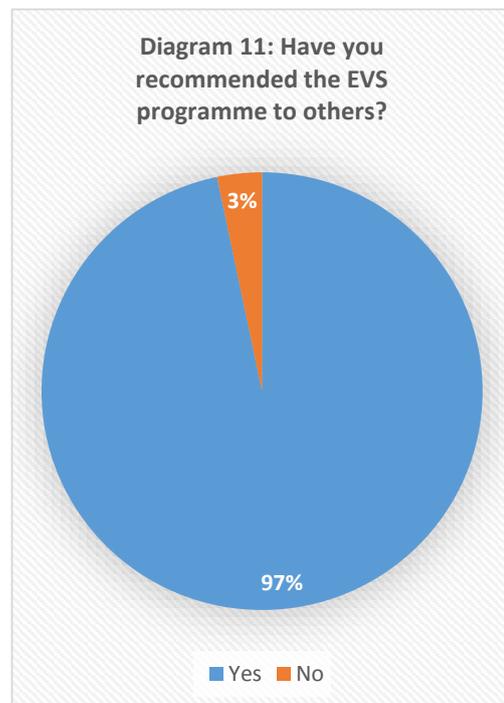
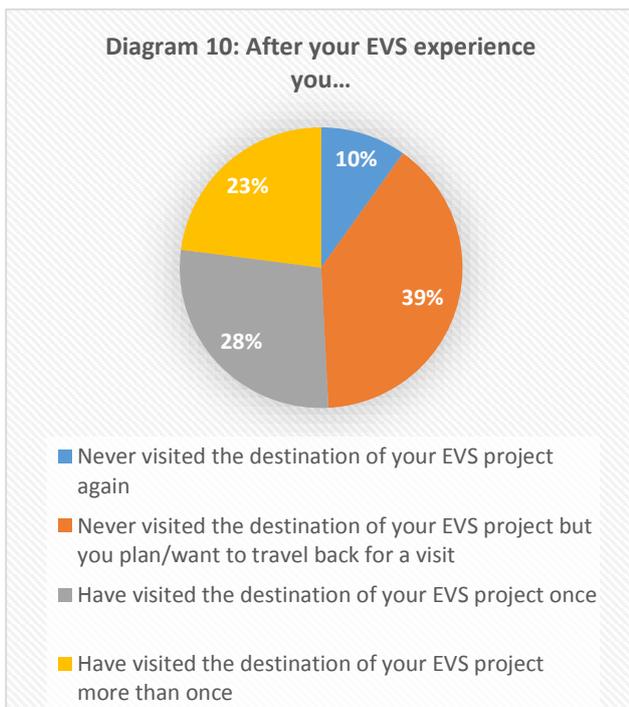
doing my EVS. I guess I learned even more about the culture, the people and the language. I came to see Spain in a different (and very positive) way" (Appendix 2, respondent 3). 1 respondent (Appendix 2, respondent 17) emphasised that her image of the destination did not change due to the reason that she had already stayed long-term (one year) in the country (France) prior to her EVS participation. Although only 1 respondent directly states that she stayed long-term at the destination prior to her EVS project experience, the above image seems to confirm Mishler's (1965) "contention that direct contact makes a more complex and differentiated image of a destination area more likely to develop when individuals have spent enough time at the destination to be exposed to its varying dimensions through developing contacts with residents and using the destination's facilities" (as in Fakeye & Crompton, 1991, p. 15).

As displayed in diagram 9, 13 respondents (21%) had previously participated in a volunteer project abroad prior to the EVS participation. Nevertheless, answers from only 3 respondents showed that their previous volunteer project participation had a direct effect on their decisions for partaking in another volunteer project. 1 of the above-mentioned EVS participants (Appendix 2, respondent 39) emphasised that her participation in volunteer projects at home (in Denmark) inspired her to engage in long-term volunteering abroad.



### 5.1.5 Recommendation of EVS programme and revisit

Judging from the percentage of respondents who have recommended the EVS programme to others (diagram 11), the vast majority of Danish EVS volunteers are mostly satisfied with the volunteer experience. Only 2 respondents (3%) have not recommended the EVS programme. Further, 55 respondents (77%) either had the intention to revisit their EVS destinations or had already visited their destinations (diagram 10).



Nevertheless, especially one comment by a volunteer who went to Azerbaijan has to be pointed out in relation to the satisfaction with the EVS projects. Although recommending the EVS programme to others, the volunteer states the following:

“It is my perception that many EVS projects are unserious, and organisations taking EVS participants not really want to do a serious project and care about the EVS participants. It's like organisations only do EVS projects for show off and to get a higher value as an organisation. This is not only what I experienced, but also what I heard from other EVS participants. I'm sure some organisations are serious about EVS, but surely there needs to be more control with the projects” (Respondent 20).

Keeping all volunteer projects at high quality is crucial, in order to secure that certain destinations are not deselected due to poorly managed projects.

There seems to be no general picture as to the reasons why some of the Danish EVS volunteers have not revisited and presumably do not want to revisit their EVS destinations. None of those respondents (20 and 61) who went to Azerbaijan planned for a revisit. It seems the two respondents did not regret their choices of EVS destinations, and the stay in the country was seen as a good personal experience. However, while one respondent (20) states “I don't think Azerbaijan is the kind of country you can just figure out”, the other respondent (61) comments, “Azerbaijan is a very special country and I wouldn't recommend anybody to go there”. Another respondent (60) who went to Portugal emphasised that he felt a personal connection to the country. Nevertheless, he also chose the option, “Never visited the destination of your EVS project again”. Yet another respondent (19) had lived in the country (France) prior to her EVS experience but never visited the destination after her EVS experience. Curiously, the one volunteer (respondent 16) who stated that his perceptions of his EVS destination turned more negative still revisited the destination (Northern Ireland) after end EVS project.

Following on from the above overview and analysis of volunteer demographics, project characteristics and programme preferences within the EVS programme, recommendation and the intention for revisit, the succeeding sub-sections delve into the respondents' answers to the open-ended questions within the current study's survey. In doing so, the subsequent sub-sections explore the Danish EVS volunteers' motivations for EVS participation and change in

perceptions/destination image. Further, the cognitive and affective destination image attributes as expressed through the respondents' answers to question 18 on the change in perceptions/destination image will be analysed. The findings are discussed in relation to the theories within the current research project's literature review.

### **5.1.6 EVS motivation**

The respondents' answers to the open-ended question on the motivation for EVS participation were categorised in relation to the theories as deliberated in the literature review. In doing so, Wearing's (2001) seven categories for volunteer tourism motivation were used for the categorisation of the EVS volunteers' motivations. Hereafter followed the counting of the number of times that each of the categories occurred within the respondents' answers. This process was further explained in the methodology chapter. The results are displayed in table 1 below. In order to briefly explore whether or not differences occurred in regards to demographics, previous visit, previous volunteer experience and sending organisation, the method of cross-tabulation was applied. The independent variables mentioned above were cross-tabulated with the dependent variables within the motivational and perception/destination image categories (refer to appendix 5 for an overview of the results).

Based on the different parameters within Callanan and Thomas' (2005) volunteer tourist framework, the Danish EVS volunteers can be situated between the *intermediate* and *deep* volunteer tourist categories. As showed in the previous sub-sections, the EVS volunteers are partaking in long-term volunteer projects. Further, although the majority of the Danish EVS volunteers had their preferences in terms of EVS project destinations, the majority (80%) also stated that the destination and the project topic were equally important, or the destination was the most important. In regards to the Danish EVS volunteers' motivations, the most notable motivations are those of travel/adventure, professional development and cultural exchange/learning. Judging from their initial motivations for EVS participation as displayed in table 1, the EVS participants would be leaning towards Callanan and Thomas' (2005) *shallow* volunteer tourist where "self-interest motives are more important than altruistic ones" (p. 197). However, as emphasised throughout the introductory chapters, the EVS programme places a strong emphasis on the individual volunteer's self-development. It is through this self-development that the individual EVS volunteer should develop a sense of solidarity towards other nationalities and cultures.

Altruism	Travel/adventure	Personal growth	Cultural exchange/learning	Professional development	The structure of the EVS programme	Right time/right place
3	38	13	21	29	14	2
5%	62%	21%	34%	44%	23%	3%

**Table 1: Motivations for participation in the EVS programme**

The following shows a few examples of the different motivations for EVS participation as expressed by the Danish EVS volunteers (refer to appendix 2).

“Wanted to make a difference.” (Altruism). (Respondent 1, went to Armenia).

“To experience a new country, new friends, and to grow as a person.” (Personal growth and cultural exchange/learning). (Respondent 11, Austria).

“Learning German. Exploring another culture not only by being a tourist. Having an everyday life in another country. Meeting new people.” (Travel/adventure, personal growth and professional development). (Respondent 13, Germany).

“Long-term project, costs covered, project-oriented as opposed to being a 1 month volunteer in an orphanage in Nepal. A good way to learn the language.” (The structure of the EVS programme and professional development). (Respondent 48, Spain).

While the first example (respondent 1) displays one of the few cases of the volunteer expressing the motivation for making a difference, a large number of the Danish EVS volunteers express their desires to explore “new” cultures and exchange experiences with people from different cultures. However, likely due to the EVS programmes focus on non-formal learning, 29 respondents (44%) mention professional development as a motivation for EVS participation. Within the present study’s survey, the motivation for professional development shows through a desire to learn or improve within a language, or to utilise the EVS experience as a form of preparation for further studies. The last of the examples above specifically displays how the EVS programme differs from the volunteer programmes often criticised within academic literature (Lyons, Hanley, Wearing & Neil, 2011). Similar to the example above (respondent 48), several other Danish EVS volunteers (14 respondents, 23%) express the favourability of the long-term volunteer projects that are free of costs

to the volunteer. As displayed in the examples above, most often the individual EVS volunteer holds several motivations for his/her EVS participation. As referred to in the literature review within the present study, Kim and Chen (2015) discussed how the different schemas of various destinations as developed in the mind of the tourist help cultivate the motivation for visiting some destinations rather than others. However, as visible through the Danish EVS volunteers' motivations for EVS participation, motivations are often expressed in rather broad terms and do often not refer to or favour specific destinations unless the individual EVS volunteer wants to learn or improve a specific language.

In regards to the differences in motivations based on demographics, previous visit, and volunteer experience and sending organisation, the following demonstrates some of the results that stand out (refer to appendix 5 for an overview of cross-tabulation tables). Personal growth and cultural exchange/learning represent the more dominant motivators for 17-19 year olds in comparison to the older volunteers. Thus, 12 of those 27 respondents (44%) at the age between 17-19 years expressed motivations in relation to cultural exchange/learning. In comparison, 6 of those 24 respondents (25%) at the age between 20-22 and 3 of those 10 respondents (30%) at the age between 23-28 expressed motivations for cultural exchange/learning. The low number of respondents within each group causes the reason for the grouping of the 23-25 and 26-28 year olds. The older volunteers seem to have a deeper desire for professional development, which also shows in their desires to gain experience to improve the CV or to gain experience in relation to further studies. Further, a greater percentage of those Danish EVS volunteers with previous volunteer experience and those who visited their EVS project destinations (areas/cities) expressed motivations for cultural exchange/learning. In other words, in comparison to those volunteers without previous experience, a greater percentage of those EVS volunteers with previous experience express desires for learning through the meeting of other cultures. Interestingly, a greater percentage of those Danish EVS volunteers with previous volunteer experiences express the structure of the EVS programme as a motivator. As shown in the example above (respondent 48), the EVS being a volunteer programme characterised by long-term projects that are free of costs to the volunteer is one of the prime motivators for EVS volunteers with previous volunteer experience.

### 5.1.7 Change in perceptions/destination image

In order to explore the Danish EVS volunteers' changes in perceptions/destination image, the following sub-section uses the same method as applied in the above investigation of the EVS volunteers' motivations. With inspiration from Kim and Chen's (2015) framework for the process of destination image formation and based on themes occurring within the respondents' answers, four categories were formed in order to explore the Danish EVS volunteers' change in perceptions towards their EVS destinations. The results are displayed in table 2 below. Identical to the method as applied in order to investigate the volunteers' motivations for EVS participation, differences in regards to demographics, previous visit and volunteer experience were explored through the method of cross-tabulation.

Mostly positive	Neutral/no change	Mostly negative	Had no/very limited knowledge or few perceptions pre-visit	N/A
29	26	1	9	2
48%	43%	2%	15%	3%

**Table 2: Change in perceptions/destination image (positive or negative)**

As displayed in table 2 above, the majority of the respondents either expressed a mostly positive change in perceptions (29 respondents, 48% of the 61 respondents), 26 respondents (43%) stated that they experienced no change or expressed themselves in a neutral manner about their EVS destinations. Nevertheless, only 2 respondents (respondents 8 and 19), both of whom had stayed in the country prior to their EVS experiences, concluded that their perceptions/images of their destinations did not change. In other words, a large number (27) of the respondents within the neutral/no change category expressed themselves in a neutral manner. Only 1 (respondent 16) who went to Ireland emphasised that his image of the EVS destination (country) "turned more negative". Some only stated that they had no or very limited knowledge about their EVS destination (country) prior to their EVS, while others explained that they had no prior knowledge and perceptions prior to their EVS experiences but their perceptions of their EVS project destinations developed positively during their EVS experiences. In other words, although the individual EVS volunteer might have unconsciously constructed an image of his/her EVS destination prior to visit, it seems that the process of further information search on the destination sometimes has been either limited or non-existent prior to arrival at the project destination. This will be further explored through the ten in-depth interviews. Thus the second phase in Gunn's model as was discussed in the literature review

might sometimes be skipped, while it is also possible that the volunteer has received no information from friends or relatives about his/her EVS project destination. The following shows a few examples of the respondents' answers to question 18 on the change in perceptions about the EVS destination (country) after the EVS experience.

“I did not know a lot about Morocco before going there, but a lot of my imaginations of Muslim countries have changed. I experienced a very open culture and I now see that a lot of the Western (Danish) prejudgements about Islam is misguided” (Respondent 53, Morocco). (Mostly positive change in perceptions/destination image; had very limited knowledge pre-visit).

“I didn't know anything about the country before, but after I feel I know the country better than anyone. I found out how different the Czech people are doing anything compared to Denmark” (Respondent 22, Czech Republic). (Neutral; No/very limited knowledge about the destination pre-visit).

“I feel now a bit of ownership /personal connection to the country, and a love for the French culture. I'm very happy that I chose France, but I also realized during my EVS that the country of choice wasn't important to experience what I had. It really didn't matter which country I was sent to, I think every country (depending on the specific projects) could have given incredible experiences. After the EVS I have been a lot more open to travel and appreciate the Eastern European countries.” (Respondent 33, France). (Mostly positive change in perceptions/destination image).

The first example (respondent 53) shows how the EVS experience has the potential to change the volunteer's perceptions/image of not just a country but also regions and religions. Thereby, as demonstrated through some of the volunteers' responses to question 18 on the change in perceptions, the EVS programme has the potential of functioning as a *worldmaking* activity that gives the volunteer the opportunity to deconstruct previously held perceptions/images of destinations. Another example of this is found in respondent 17 who went to Jordan and comments, “It changed to the good, I'm going back some day and no matter how many bad news I hear about the Middle East and Jordan, I have my own impression now.” In other words, the volunteer's EVS experience in Jordan makes her capable of denying some versions of reality. Both respondent 53 and 17 display positive changes in perceptions towards the volunteer project destination.

The second example (respondent 22) demonstrate a more neutral response. While the volunteer's knowledge about the country Czech Republic has increased, the volunteer does not specifically emphasise any positive or negative changes in her perception/image of the project destination.

The third and last example (respondent 33) exemplifies the importance of the volunteer project in the process of destination image formation within the EVS programme. It was demonstrated earlier how several of the Danish EVS volunteers emphasised the importance of the project topic in relation to the project destination. In the example above (respondent 33), the quality and value of the individual EVS project is demonstrated to be of great importance, in order for the EVS programme to foster positive image changes of the EVS programme destinations in the minds of the volunteers. Thus, communicating this quality and value should start well before the volunteer decides on a specific destination, in order to convince the potential EVS volunteer to travel to those destinations they would otherwise have denied or not even considered. Further, the example (respondent 33) demonstrates that in a volunteer tourism context, an extra phase needs to be added to Gunn's (1988) model/framework for the process of destination image formation. In the above example, the volunteer experience in France inspires the volunteer to consider the travel to other destinations after her EVS participation. In this way, inspired by the model by Fakeye and Crompton (1991) as discussed in the literature review, the present study develops a new model for the process of destination image formation within a volunteer tourism context. Interestingly, in the above example, the volunteer becomes more open towards the Eastern European countries, an area of which it was emphasised earlier that several EVS volunteers did not prefer. Likely, the Danish EVS participant volunteered and lived together with EVS volunteer from Eastern European countries, and this might have caused the increased interest in Eastern Europe.

Further, it has to be mentioned that the theory stating, "markets that are closer to the destination have more detailed images than geographically distant markets" (Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010, p. 578) does not seem to be fully confirmed through the answers from the Danish EVS volunteers. Within the present study's survey, EVS volunteers participating in projects situated in distant destinations (for instance Morocco, Turkey, Azerbaijan) as well as volunteers taking part in projects closer to Denmark (for instance Germany, Czech Republic, Northern Ireland) state that they did not

have any clear perceptions or knowledge about the project destination (country) prior to their EVS experiences.

Concerning the differences in motivations based on demographics, previous visit and volunteer experience, the following demonstrates some of the results that stand out (refer to appendix 5 for an overview of cross-tabulation tables). While a greater percentage (59%, 16 respondents) of the younger volunteers (17-19 years of age) express a positive change in perceptions towards their EVS destinations in comparison to the older volunteer (20%, 2 respondents), the older volunteers (23-28) are more prone to express themselves in neutral terms or to state that they experienced no change in perceptions. Further, whereas a higher percentage of male respondents are neutral/express no change in their perceptions towards their EVS destination, a higher percentage (51%, 26 respondents) of female respondents express positive changes in perceptions in comparison to male respondents (30%, 3 respondents). However, this difference could also be explained by the fact that a higher percentage of female respondents (11 of 51 female respondents, 22% in comparison to 1 out of 10 male, 10%) visited the area/city of their volunteer project prior to their EVS experience.

### 5.1.7 Destination image attributes

In order to explore the various destination image attributes of which the Danish EVS volunteers ascribe to their EVS project destinations, the following sub-section uses the same method as applied in two previous sub-sections. First, the various destination image attributes were divided into seven categories as displayed in table 3 below. Echtner and Ritchie (1991, 1993), as referred to in the literature review of the present study, inspired some of the destination image attributes included in the table. Second, several themes were added to the seven categories. Within a volunteer tourism context, it was found necessary to include additional categories to those of Echtner and Ritchie (1991, 1993).

People (Friendliness, mentality, way of living (cognitive and affective)	Culture (diversity in cultures and customs, multi-cultural, open culture, East-West divide (cognitive and affective)	Nature (beautiful scenery, diversity in scenery) (cognitive and affective)	Language(s) of the destination (cognitive and affective)	Developed (modern)/developing country (cognitive and affective)	Personal attachment (affective)	Other	N/A
21	27	6	7	4	5	10	2
34%	44%	10%	12%	7%	8%	16%	3%

Table 3: Cognitive and affective destination image attributes for EVS volunteers

As shown in table 3, the culture and people of the destination are those destination image attributes mentioned the most by the EVS volunteers. The following shows a couple of examples of the above destination image attributes as described by the Danish EVS volunteers.

“I came to find that Bulgaria was a country full of contrasts. Sofia and the bigger cities developing into modern European cities while the countryside was a little more like a picture from the past. But not anything like the poor gypsy country I had imagined” (Respondent 21, Bulgaria). (Developed (modern)/developing country).

“After having spent 10 months in France I had become more aware of the cultural differences but also the similarities. It's interesting to experience living in another country and learn the language as this is a very important way to understand the people speaking the language. I feel more attached to France after my stay and feel like the stay has made me understand the world in a new and greater perspective.” (Respondent 39, France). (People; culture; language of the destination; personal attachment).

“I saw Spain as a lot more than just beaches and hot weather. It contains so much culture, diversity in nature and the people.” (Respondent 44, Spain). (People; culture; nature).

“I learned a lot about a country in development and learned that Eastern Europe is not so different from the west” (Respondent 37, Armenia). (Culture; Developed (modern)/developing country, East-West divide).

The first and the last of the above examples (respondents 21 and 37) emphasises the developed and modern in contrast to the developing destination. Often this contrast is set within a context of an East-West divide, where the East represents a developing region. This is exemplified in the comment by respondent 37. The second example (respondent 39) clarifies the link between the cognitive and affective destination image components. The knowledge of the language and the understanding of the inhabitants/people of the country and their culture arouses the feeling of personal attachment to the country (destination). Further, the volunteer's (respondent 39) comment also demonstrates the EVS programmes capability of *worldmaking*, as the volunteer proclaims that she came to understand the world in a new perspective. Moreover, while the third example (respondent 44) accentuates attributes within the people, culture and nature of Spain, the example

also displays how the EVS experience makes the volunteer capable of denying the holistic and stereotypical image of Spain as a vacation destination as typically portrayed by the tourism industry (travel agents, tour operators, etc.). Within the “other” category, the responses typically involve statements about the political situation within the host country.

## **5.2 Interview findings**

The above section utilised both quantitative and qualitative research methods to analyse the quantitative data collected through a survey. The following presents and discusses the findings from the ten interviews conducted between November 22<sup>nd</sup> and November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015. In doing so, the subsequent section takes its point of departure in the above survey analysis, in order to explore the EVS volunteers’ processes of destination image formation through an in-depth qualitative analysis. Following on from the above survey analysis, a new framework for the process of destination image formation in a volunteer tourism context is further developed. The final model/framework will be presented in the conclusion that sums up the entire research project. In addition, in order to add a new perspective to existing literature on volunteer tourism, the next section also explores the way in which the Danish European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme participants distinguish between commercial volunteer tourism and the EVS programme. The section is divided into sub-sections that follows the process of destination image formation in the pre-visit, visit and post-volunteering phases. As explained in the methodology chapter, the investigation of the ten interviews follows a thematic analysis based on the process of destination image formation and the topic of volunteer tourism as discussed in the literature review (refer to appendix 6 for a schematic overview).

### **5.2.1 Before EVS experience**

Generally, all of the ten interviewees had some degree of travel experience prior to their EVS participation. However, some interviewees more than others clearly had more experience in travelling. While Gitte (appendix 4e), Nanna (appendix 4c) and Camilla (appendix 4d) did not have the experience of travelling without their parents prior to their EVS experiences, Anders (appendix 4a), Clara (appendix 4h) and Julie (appendix 4i) are those interviewees who had the most extensive travel experience prior to their EVS project experiences. Frederikke (appendix 4g) and Nanna indicate that they had not travelled outside of Europe prior to their EVS experiences. While Anders and Clara seem to be those interviewees who have visited the most countries, both Clara and Julie had the experience of staying long-term (one year) in USA and Canada respectively as exchange

students. All of the interviewees do to a greater or lesser extent express how their previous travel experiences affected their choices of the EVS programme and volunteer projects. The following quotes provide two examples:

“I could only choose between two destinations, Armenia and Romania. Because of my stay in Moldova, I had already met a lot of Romanians there, so yeah I just knew that would be cool. So, it is... I mean, it was one of the destinations where I liked to go because I knew some Romanians, and I knew the language... I would be able to learn it there.” (Anders) (Appendix 4a, starting from line 40 in the transcript).

“I couldn’t really see myself just going somewhere for just one month or two month. I think it actually has something to do with the fact that I learned a lot in Canada because I feel like you really don’t go into depth with the culture that well if you only live like two month.” (Julie) (Appendix 4i, 23).

Due to the application deadline, Anders was restricted to the choice between two countries (Armenia and Romania) because of his late application. Nevertheless, his final choice of EVS project destination relied on his experiences and conversations with Romanians through prior participation in a communication and training course in Moldova. Anders’ choice of the EVS programme was caused by the induced information about the programme that was provided in form of promotion at the training course attended in Moldova. The case with Anders seems to confirm the theory by Vogt and Andereck (2003) on the impact and intensity of prior travel experience on evaluation of alternative destinations. Julie’s prior experience of staying long-term abroad had an impact on her choosing the EVS programme that is characterised by its long-term projects. As demonstrated through the comment by Julie, the length of visit at prior travel experience might also influence the choice of length of a later travel experience.

An aspect also discussed within the survey analysis concerned the weight between the choice of volunteer project and destination. It was found that sometimes the project topic was considered more important than the destination of the EVS project. A further comprehension of the importance of the choice of destination in relation to project topic is found when investigating the comments by the interviewee Cecilie (appendix 4f). Similar to Anders, Cecilie represents a case in which the limited availability of short-term EVS projects had an influence on the final destination of the EVS

project. As stated by Cecilie, “I didn’t really choose the country, I just chose the project and it was in Croatia. So it just was a natural thing” (Appendix 4f, 32). Cecilie continues, [T]hey [the Danish sending organisation Dansk ICYE] suggested some different projects and this one [in Croatia] sounded the nicest. And then Croatia was just where it was so... I think I would have taken it if it was in other places as well.” (Appendix 4f, 36). In the end, although Cecilie had been visiting the EVS project destination prior to her EVS experience, she claims that the project topic was more important than the actual destination of the EVS project. Thereby, it seems that the active information search and process involved in the “evaluation of alternative destinations’ benefits and images” (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991, p. 11) played a minor role in comparison to the evaluation of alternative EVS projects’ benefits. In the case of Anders, the benefits of the entire EVS programme also had an effect on the final choice of EVS project destination. Although the meeting with Romanians had an effect on the choice of the final EVS destination, Anders also states, “[I]t wasn’t the place I preferred in the whole world” (appendix 4a, 43). Anders’ most preferred destinations would have been countries outside of the EVS programme area. Anders mentioned the benefits in terms of the EVS being well structured and free of costs to the volunteer as the key determinants for his choice of the EVS programme and thereby final choice of destination. Those Danish EVS volunteers who, in comparison to Anders and Cecilie, were less restricted by time or preferred project length instead narrowed down their initial EVS project search through the sorting of preferred or non-preferred destinations. Further, within the survey, all of the ten interviewees except Cecilie (respondent 31) had preferred and/or non-preferred destinations for their EVS projects. It was demonstrated in the survey analysis that certain destinations are sometimes deselected due to the motivation for learning/improving a specific language or the lack of language barriers. However, the reason as to why several respondents mentioned Eastern Europe as a specific non-preferred destination might also be explained by a general lack of knowledge of the area. This is demonstrated through the comment by the interviewee Frederikke:

“I think... I had never really travelled in Eastern European countries, and I didn’t really have any interest in the culture at that point. I simply didn’t find it interesting. I think that I never really heard anything about it. There was a lot of different countries that I didn’t really know anything about... so that was the reason. It was just something that I never really thought about. (...)It was more the well-known countries that I was interested in.” (41)

While Frederikke initially was not interested in those destinations unknown to her, it was shown in the survey analysis that several respondents (9 respondents, 15%) went to destinations of which they initially did not know. The interviews with Julie (appendix 4i) and Sofie (appendix 4j) reveal that sometimes the Danish EVS participants prefer those less-known destinations.

All interviewees were sent information about their specific EVS projects and destinations after being accepted to their projects. Nevertheless, it seems that not all interviewees received a great deal of information from their hosting organisations in their respective host countries. As emphasised by Julie (appendix 4i), she only received little information about her specific EVS project destination (Jordan) prior to her arrival. Moreover, Julie states, “It was quite difficult to actually find people who had actually been there [in Jordan]. I think there was one person in my sending organisation [Dansk ICYE] who went there on holiday. But they [Dansk ICYE] didn’t really have anyone who had been there before me.” (Appendix 4i, 73). Yet, Julie also stresses that although she did not know much about her EVS project destination prior to arrival, she thought that it “was part of the experience. I remember actually feeling that I didn’t want to know too much about it before going because I didn’t want to start having... or imagining what it was going to be like” (Appendix 4i, 76). This demonstrates that occasionally the EVS volunteer skips the phase within the process of destination image formation that involves the modification of already held conscious or unconscious images of a destination through an active information search process (induced image). Fakeye and Crompton (1991) also acknowledged that occasionally an active information search process is non-existent. Although the interviewee Frederikke (appendix 4g) highlight that she did a bit of research about her EVS project and destination (Montendre, France) prior to arrival, she states, “I also remember that I didn’t want to know too much because it shouldn’t be some expectations I had made up, or something... I didn’t want to have too high expectations. I really wanted to go there and experience it without any judgements” (72). However, as argued by Pernecky (2010),

“Tourists come with their own “baggage” (here I refer to one’s prejudices as opposed to a suitcase) and are shaped by a number of socio-cultural contexts. (...) Tourists travel well “prepared” and have already pre-interpreted the places and situations they will encounter” (p. 10).

Within an EVS context, although examples exist of Danish EVS volunteers trying to avoid too much research on their respective volunteer projects and destinations, the total avoidance of judgements is difficult if not impossible. In other words, whether consciously or unconsciously, the EVS volunteers will have created mental images of their respective destinations prior to arrival.

### **5.2.2 During EVS experience**

While it was evident from the survey analysis that the majority of the Danish EVS volunteers experienced a change in perceptions towards their respective EVS project destinations, it was not always clear how this change occurred. Within the interviews, it shows that the change in perceptions towards/image of the EVS destination (local area and host country in general) occurs through...:

- ...the interaction with both locals and other international EVS volunteers
- ...the Danish EVS volunteer's observations of differences in culture and way of living in the host country as compared to home country.
- ...the EVS volunteer's travel experience in the host country.

Further, the Danish EVS volunteers' meeting and discussions with other international EVS volunteers at the project and/or at the EVS on-arrival and mid-term camps facilitated the EVS volunteers' image formation on several destinations. The above is exemplified in the following comments:

“I remember that we read this document, which was posted in schools, which was just about how the schools were supposed to be secular, so you couldn't have religious symbols... and all of these, I think it was fifteen or twenty rules for how you should behave and be dressed in schools for small kids. I found that quite surprising because it's not at all like that in Denmark, and I think that you would assume that our countries [Denmark and France] are quite similar. There were tons of these situations where I realised there is a big difference. It may seem quite small but it actually is quite important for the way you look at things.” (Rikke) (Appendix 4b, starting from line 108) (Observation of differences in culture and way of living in comparison to home country).

“I got a friend... a Moroccan friend (...). She was a few years older than me, and she was the only one of my colleagues who spoke English, so I spent a lot of time with her. She was wearing

a scarf, like a Muslim woman. Most women down there [in Morocco] are very religious, and before I went there I had a lot of prejudgements about religion. And we discussed a lot about religion and Islam, and I think she helped me change my views about Islam and religion in all cases”. (Sofie) (Appendix 4j, 63) (Interaction with a local that changes the volunteer’s perspective and image of Morocco as a Muslim country).

“It was more about (...) the differences between our countries (...), and not so much about Germany (...). So I think I learned more about the other countries that the other volunteers came from than Germany on these seminars [EVS on-arrival and mid-term seminars]. But it changed my... what do you say... the way I see the other countries and the other cultures” (Nanna) (Appendix 4c, 151) (The interaction with other international EVS volunteers facilitated Nanna’s image formation in relation to the home countries of the other international EVS volunteers).

“[T]o say that French people are just French is not necessarily true at all because in a lot of places there’s a big difference between the nature of for instance how the country is. But I think also like I said Parisians are really Parisians, and for example if you go to Bretagne... they actually want to be a country [gain independence] and it’s a big difference. It depends where you go, how things look and there were a lot of traditions, local traditions and it does not look the same, and they don’t want it to.” (Rikke) (Appendix 4b, 184) (Rikke gains a more complex and nuanced image of the host country through her travel experiences during her EVS experience).

While Mishler (1965), Gunn (1988), Fakeye and Crompton (1991) and Beerli and Martín (2004) conclude that the contact and level of interaction with locals and the activities involved in the travel experience helps form the traveller’s image of the destination visited, they did not include the importance of the traveller’s interaction with other international travellers within destination image formation. While Sofie (appendix 4j), Nanna (appendix 4c) and Gitte (appendix 4e) did not live or work together with other international EVS volunteers, the EVS mid-term and on-arrival seminars functioned as activities that helped form their images of countries other than those of their EVS host countries. As opposed to Nanna, Clara (appendix 4h) highlighted how the EVS seminars also helped her form more complex and nuanced images of the host destination (in this case Spain), as the seminars facilitated discussions about the different regions within the country in which the international EVS volunteers were situated.

### **5.2.3 After EVS experience**

Although the survey analysis revealed that the vast majority (55 respondents, 77%) of Danish EVS volunteers either had the intention to revisit or already had revisited their EVS project destinations, the survey did not fully disclose how the EVS experience functioned as an inspiration for travel to other countries after end project. While most of the interviewees mention that they are still in contact with some or all of their international EVS co-volunteers with whom they became friends during the EVS, Nanna (appendix 4c) have plans to visit her Turkish friend for a wedding in Turkey, and Cecilie (appendix 4f) has already visited some of her friends from various countries around Europe. Further, Frederikke who also stated in the survey that she through her EVS experience had come to appreciate Eastern European countries further explains herself in the interview:

“[L]ater [after the EVS experience] I travelled and I saw a different practice in Eastern Europe, and... I don't know... I was just really interested, and it's definitely because I met those people [the EVS volunteers from the Eastern European countries] at that point [during the EVS experience].” (Appendix 4g, 65)

In this way, the EVS volunteer continues the process of destination image formation after end EVS experience. As stated by Fakeye and Crompton (1991), “Experience with a destination will feed back and influence evaluation of alternative destinations on the next occasion a selection is made” (p. 11). Nevertheless, no general explanation is given as to how this evaluation of alternative destinations takes place. In the case of the EVS, it shows that the EVS experience facilitates the Danish EVS volunteers' establishments of new friendships with other EVS volunteers from various different countries, and these friendships help foster the process of image formation of various countries. This process is continued through the Danish EVS volunteers visiting of their EVS friends and the visiting of 'new' places of interest.

### **5.2.4 The EVS programme versus commercial volunteer tourism**

Another aspect of interest that shows within the interviews was how the interviewees explain their preferences for the EVS programme in relation to any other volunteer project or programme abroad. Although the survey analysis demonstrated that numerous respondents expressed the favourability of the EVS in relation to it being free of costs to the volunteer, the EVS programme was not

compared in further details in relation to other volunteer programmes. As it is stated in the introduction, the present study seeks to add an extra perspective to the body of knowledge about volunteer tourism through both theoretical and practical insights derived from a case study of the EVS. This extra perspective has been explored through the exploration of the concept of destination image formation in a volunteer tourism context. However, although not being the focus within the present study, another important aspect involves the Danish EVS volunteers' descriptions of the EVS programme in relation to commercial volunteer tourism. Therefore, this sub-section is devoted to this subject.

Although the interviewees are quick to point out the costs of participation in other volunteer programmes as one of the deciding factors for choosing the EVS programme, the following examples reveal a deeper perspective on the separation between the EVS programme from the commercial volunteer tourism projects/programmes as discussed in the literature review:

“I also spoke to someone, and I think she said it quite nicely... I think that when you haven't paid for it you feel like you owe something. You feel like you have to work because... it was more like a pure experience of volunteering. If I paid a lot of money to go somewhere, I think I would have felt like I... like the place owed me because I paid to be there, so I was supposed to have a really good time. But when you get something offered, I think you're more willing to give of yourself, and you're more willing to also enjoy when it's not easy and to take on the difficulties and struggles.” (Appendix 4b, 42) (Rikke).

“I was very interested in the volunteer action culture but I find it kind of silly that you have to pay 30-40,000 DKR to do volunteer work, and then somebody told me about the EVS and that you don't have to pay for it.” (Appendix 4h, 26) (Clara).

“Some other programmes, it seems like they just rather want your money. They don't necessarily want you to gain that much from it, and I think the purpose with the EVS is more like they want you to gain something and they want the whole community to gain something from it. So I think that... I liked that. And the fact that it was also long-term. I couldn't really see myself just going somewhere for just one month or two month. I think it actually has something to do with the fact that I learned a lot in Canada because I feel like you really don't go into depth with the culture

that well if you only live like two month... like the more common thing to do on a volunteer programme.” (Appendix 4i, 19) (Julie).

“I wanted to go abroad but really for a longer time like a year or ten month or something like that. But all other kinds of volunteer work was for three month. And I didn’t want to go to these distant countries like somewhere in Africa or something like that. I wanted to keep it more simple but still a more different culture. With the EVS it was possible to go for a whole year.” (Appendix 4d, 20) (Camilla).

In the examples above, Rikke, Clara and Julie criticise the general volunteer tourism sector along the same lines as current academic literature as discussed within the literature review of the present study. The critique is directed towards short-term volunteer projects and programmes that charge the volunteer with a considerable amount of money for volunteer participation. It was argued in the literature review that long-term volunteer projects to a greater degree forced the volunteer to be more committed to his or her host organisation and the project in general. However, Rikke adds an extra perspective, as she argues that the strength within the EVS programme in relation to commercial volunteer programmes lies in the volunteer being more committed to do an extra effort for the host organisation due to the EVS programme being free of costs. Further, Camilla and Rikke highlight the generally close proximity of the EVS projects to the volunteer’s home country. As opposed to those volunteer projects situated in the Global South, Rikke argues that the close proximity of her project destination to Denmark makes it easier for her to maintain a relationship with the host destination. Moreover, Camilla argues that one does not have to travel a great distance in order to gain a cultural experience. Generally, the interviewees also point out the strength of long-term volunteering as offered by the EVS programme. As argued by the interviewees, the long-term projects offer a greater opportunity for immersion in the local culture of the project destination. Further, it is argued by Mishler (1965) “that longer exposure in an area contributes to a more complex, differentiated image” (as in Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). Still, Cecilie (Appendix 4f) who is among the 10% (6 respondents) in the survey who participated in a project lasting less than five month, argue that she had the opportunity to immerse herself in the culture of the host culture.

## 6. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to explore the process of destination image formation in pre-visit, visit and post volunteering phases of the travel experience. The study took as its point of departure an exploration of volunteer tourism in a non-commercial context thereby distinguishing from the large majority of studies currently available. Thereby, this study sought to investigate the European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme through the following problem formulation:

*How do volunteers form their destination images through their participation in the European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme?*

Providing the focus of the study, the EVS programme was explored from the perspectives of Danish former EVS volunteers. Representing a non-commercial volunteer programme, the EVS presented a suitable case for the present study. While research on non-commercial volunteer tourism was found to be very sparse, studies combining the phenomenon of volunteer tourism and the concept of destination image formation seemed to be non-existent. In response to this, the present research project provided an alternative perspective to the dominant one within volunteer tourism and allowed for a more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon. The literature reviewed as part of this thesis found that much of recent literature addresses a narrow aspect of volunteer tourism. First, it was found that recent academic literature generally provide a critical focus on the commoditization of volunteer tourism with attention to short-term projects in the developing Global South. Second, much attention had also been guided towards the development of frameworks for volunteer tourist motivation, understanding the business of volunteer tourism. This current study has departed from these perspectives to deliver a useful input in the study of volunteer tourists' destination image formation. This current study of the EVS programme differs from the focus of academic literature on commercial volunteer tourism to investigate a case of volunteer tourism which is government-funded, long-term and situated in a European context.

In order to achieve the aim of the research project four objectives were established. The first objective sought to identify by way of a literature review (chapter 4), aspects and phases involved in the process of destination image formation in a volunteer tourism context. In this study, the individual's formation of a destination's image was understood as involving multiple personal aspects (travel motivation, previous travel experience and socio-demographic characteristics) as well as information sources (promotional material, recommendations from friends and relatives,

etc.). Academic literature formulated the process of destination image formation as consisting of seven to eight phases/stages. Initially, the traveller's accumulated mental images of various destinations (organic image) based on the personal aspects mentioned above is supplemented by further information (induced image) from various sources as revealed above. An active information search is initiated whereupon the final decision to visit a given destination is chosen. At the destination, a more complex image is formed that is dependent on the intensity of the visit (degree of interaction with locals, length of stay and the level and type of activity engagement at the destination). Upon return, the visited destination is evaluated in relation to other destinations. Due to the seemingly non-existent literature on destination image formation within a volunteer tourism context, it was found necessary to combine several theoretical frameworks that provided for the following case analysis of Danish former EVS volunteers. The literature review concluded that the concept of *worldmaking* provided for a perspective different from that of the dominating academic literature within volunteer tourism and destination image formation. Further, the concept of *worldmaking* delivered a useful way of comprehending the concept of destination image formation within a volunteer tourism context, as it guided the attention towards the volunteer's conscious and unconscious acceptance of certain versions of the world and the denial of other versions.

The second and third objectives of the dissertation were linked to the analysis (chapter 5). While the second objective used a deductive approach drawing from theories within the literature review, the third objective made use of an inductive approach through the development of a new framework for the process of destination image formation within a European Voluntary Service (EVS) context. The second objective read as follows:

- Drawing upon the present case study of the European Voluntary Service (EVS) and a theoretical framework as laid out in the literature review examine how volunteers through the EVS construct images of project destinations (countries).

Numerous of the Danish EVS volunteers expressed how their image formation of their individual project destinations developed in the meeting with the locals and a different culture. Further, a number of the volunteers also explained how their cognitive understanding of the EVS project destination's culture, history and inhabitants developed the volunteer's sense of personal attachment to the project destination (country).

The third objective read as follows:

- Through an emergent inductive research process, develop a new framework for the EVS volunteers' processes of destination image formation.

While theory within the literature on volunteer tourism and destination image formation provided useful frameworks, additional empirical studies added further knowledge. In the **pre-visit phase** of the individual EVS volunteer's process of destination image formation, it was found that the final destination of the volunteer project sometimes rested more upon the choice of project topic rather than the beneficial image of the destination. Occasionally, the active information search on the destination of the EVS project was either limited or non-existent in the pre-visit phase. The in-depth interviews specifically identified three aspects that have an effect on Danish EVS volunteer's image formation **while at the project destination**; these aspects include:

- The interaction with both locals and other international EVS volunteers
- The Danish EVS volunteer's observations of differences in culture and way of living in the host country as compared to home country.
- The EVS volunteer's travel experience in the host country.

Aspects within destination image formation that were not identified within academic literature included the visitor's/volunteer's interaction with other international visitors/volunteers. The ten interviews identified a number of cases in which the Danish EVS volunteers formed positive images of destinations (countries) other than the destination of their projects. This positive image change occurred through the interaction with other international volunteers and occasionally led the Danish EVS volunteers to visit other destinations after end EVS projects. In several instances, the empirical data also displayed a positive change in the volunteer's image of the project destination after the volunteer's interaction with locals. Through the Danish EVS volunteers' interactions with both locals and international volunteers, the EVS programme shows its ability to function as a *worldmaking* activity, as it lets the volunteer construct more complex images of several destinations. Thereby, it showed in numerous instances that the EVS experience led the Danish EVS volunteers to deconstruct previously held perceptions and sometimes stereotypical images of both the EVS destination (country) and other international EVS volunteers' home countries. In other words, in the case study of the Danish EVS volunteers, the EVS programme exhibited its potential to achieve its overall aim that is to “develop solidarity, mutual understanding and

tolerance among young people” (European Commission, 2015(b), para. 3). This potential was demonstrated through the positive change in the individual volunteer’s image of several countries.

## **6.1 Managerial implications**

The fourth objective of this research project involved the managerial implications of the findings within the case study of Danish former EVS volunteers. The objective read as follows:

- Identify what actions can be taken in order for the EVS programme to be more successful in the improvement of destination image at EVS programme destinations.

With a very few exceptions, the Danish EVS volunteers expressed their satisfaction with the structuring of the EVS programme. However, the majority of the respondents (31 respondents, 51%) within the survey stated that there were regions, countries or cities in which they preferred not to work on their EVS projects. Although some of the volunteers sorted out several destinations based on the motivation for learning or improving a language or because of language barriers, it seems that the opportunity sometimes arises to challenge the volunteer on his/her preferred choice of EVS project destination. In other words, a number of successful cases also showed in which the volunteer worked at a project in a destination (country or region) of which he/she initially did not prefer. Therefore, a suggestion to the two sending organisations AFS Interkultur and Dansk ICYE could be to display the above-mentioned cases to future Danish EVS volunteers during their search for EVS projects. Further, it suggests that...

1. ...the sending organisations should be aware of pre-existing destination images that may influence a participant’s satisfaction with their projects, with potential stress levels.
2. ...there is an opportunity for the sending organisations to directly and explicitly address pre-existing destination images by awareness raising and activating participants’ self-reflexivity. Prompting participants to openly reflect on their assumptions and challenge their thinking is undoubtedly an important skill for volunteering.

## **6.2 Limitations, further research and final comments**

Some limitations within this research project have to be mentioned. One of the limitations within the project rests upon the limited timeframe and space within the paper. While the researcher participated in a seminar involving one Danish and a few international EVS volunteers through the

sending organisation AFS Interkultur, this activity did not find its way to the final paper. Further studies could more specifically address the pre-, during and post EVS seminars. Moreover, as the investigation of the low percentage of Danish male EVS participants was not part of the present study, future studies could more specifically address the difference in the percentage of male and female EVS volunteers.

Finally, it has to be stated that this research project has been of importance in the researcher's own journey towards a comprehension of own practical experiences within volunteer tourism. As stated in the methodology chapter, the researcher engaged in the EVS programme in 2010. Although this thesis is a culmination of my academic explorations of volunteer tourism within the Tourism Master's course, it will not be the end of my journey, as my interest in volunteer tourism will continue in the future.

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## 8. Appendix

### 8.1 Appendix 1: Online survey form

# European Voluntary Service (EVS) participants & destination image

The purpose of the study is to explore how volunteers form their destination images through their participation in the EVS programme.

As a previous EVS participant, I'm very much interested in your experience and the impact that the EVS has had on you. Remember that in order to answer this survey you have to have returned to Denmark from your EVS project.

If you have any questions, contact me through the following email:  
[hwillads@gmail.com](mailto:hwillads@gmail.com)

This survey will close on Tuesday, November 17, 2015.

Your answer is very much appreciated.

**\*Required**

## You, the EVS volunteer

### 1. What year did you start at your EVS project? \*

Remember that in order to answer this survey you MUST have started at your EVS project in one of the following years:

- 2012
- 2013
- 2014
- 2015

### 2. Your sending organisation \*

- AFS Interkultur
- Dansk ICYE

### 3. Your gender \*

- Male

- Female

**4. What was your age at the start of your EVS participation? \***

- 17-19
- 20-22
- 23-25
- 26-28
- 29-30

**5. What level of education had you completed at the time of your EVS participation? \***

- High School
- AP degree (Academy Profession Degree)
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Other:

## Your previous travel and volunteer experience

**6. Did you participate in a volunteer project abroad BEFORE your EVS experience? \***

- Yes
- No

**7. Did you visit the area/city of your EVS project BEFORE your EVS experience? \***

- Yes
- No

## Generally about your EVS project

**8. Length of your EVS project \***

- Less than 2 month
- 2-4 month
- 5-6 month
- 7-8 month
- 9-10 month
- 11-12 month

**9. Destination of your EVS project \***

Name country and city/village

**10. What was/were the main aim(s) of your EVS project? \***

please explain in brief

## Your motivation

**11. What was your initial motivation for EVS participation? \***

Please explain in brief

## Your preferences

**12. Did you have any regions, countries or cities where you preferred to do your EVS project? \***

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If you replied "No" or "Not sure" to question 12, skip to question 15

**13. Please specify the regions, countries or cities which you preferred.**

**14. Was the country where you did your EVS project your FIRST choice?**

- Yes
- No

**15. Were there any regions, countries or cities in which you preferred NOT to do your EVS project? \***

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If you replied "No" or "Not sure" to question 15, skip to question 17

**16. Please specify the region/regions, countries or cities in which you preferred NOT to do your EVS**

**17. What was the most important aspect in choosing your EVS programme? \***

- The destination was the most important to me.
- The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
- The project topic was the most important to me.

## Your perceptions of the host country

**18. AFTER your EVS experience: How did your perceptions about the destination (country) of your EVS project change? \***

Please explain in brief.

## Recommendation and intention to revisit

**19. Have you recommended the EVS programme to others? \***

- Yes
- No

**20. After your EVS experience you... \***

- Never visited the destination of your EVS project again

- Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
- Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
- Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once

## Participation in interview

**21. I would really appreciate having the opportunity to discuss with you your experiences as an EVS participant. If you would like to participate in an interview, please enter your Skype name and email here.**

The interview will be done through Skype and will be in English. The interview will be recorded, and the recordings will be used for analysis. You can at any time wish to stay anonymous.

*Never submit passwords through Google Forms.*

## 8.2 Appendix 2: Survey results

Participant no.	1. What year did you start at your EVS project?	2. Your sending organisation	3. Your gender	4. What was your age at the start of your EVS participation?	5. What level of education had you completed at the time of your EVS participation?
1	2014	AFS Interkultur	Female	23-25	Master's degree
2	2014	AFS Interkultur	Female	23-25	Bachelor's degree
3	2012	AFS Interkultur	Female	20-22	High School
4	2013	AFS Interkultur	Male	23-25	Bachelor's degree
5	2012	AFS Interkultur	Female	17-19	High School
6	2013	AFS Interkultur	Female	17-19	High School
7	2014	AFS Interkultur	Male	20-22	High School
8	2014	AFS Interkultur	Female	17-19	High School
9	2013	AFS Interkultur	Male	17-19	High School
10	2013	AFS Interkultur	Female	17-19	High School
11	2013	AFS Interkultur	Female	17-19	High School
12	2014	AFS Interkultur	Female	17-19	High School
13	2012	AFS Interkultur	Female	20-22	High School
14	2012	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School
15	2012	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
16	2013	Dansk ICYE	Male	20-22	High School
17	2014	Dansk ICYE	Female	23-25	AP degree (Academy Profession Degree)
18	2012	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School
19	2012	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
20	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School
21	2014	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School
22	2012	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
23	2014	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	10th grade
24	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School
25	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
26	2012	Dansk ICYE	Male	17-19	High School
27	2012	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
28	2013	AFS Interkultur	Female	20-22	High School
29	2014	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	Bachelor's degree
30	2014	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School
31	2014	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School
32	2014	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
33	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
34	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School

35	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
36	2014	Dansk ICYE	Female	23-25	Bachelor's degree
37	2014	AFS Interkultur	Male	20-22	High School
38	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	23-25	Master's degree
39	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
40	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
41	2014	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
42	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
43	2013	Dansk ICYE	Male	23-25	Bachelor's degree
44	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
45	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
46	2012	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
47	2012	Dansk ICYE	Male	20-22	High School
48	2013	AFS Interkultur	Female	20-22	High School
49	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School
50	2014	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School
51	2014	AFS Interkultur	Female	20-22	High School
52	2014	Dansk ICYE	Female	23-25	High School
53	2012	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School
54	2012	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
55	2012	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
56	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School
57	2013	Dansk ICYE	Female	17-19	High School
58	2013	Dansk ICYE	Male	26-28	High School
59	2014	Dansk ICYE	Female	20-22	High School
60	2012	AFS Interkultur	Female	23-25	High School
61	2013	Dansk ICYE	Male	20-22	High School

Participant no.	6. Did you participate in a volunteer project abroad BEFORE your EVS experience?	7. Did you visit the area/city of your EVS project BEFORE your EVS experience?	8. Length of your EVS project	9. Destination of your EVS project
1	No	No	2-4 month	Yerevan, Armenia
2	Yes	No	7-8 month	Spain, Palencia
3	Yes	Yes	5-6 month	Málaga, Spain
4	No	No	9-10 month	Băile Tuşnad, Romania
5	No	No	9-10 month	Verona, Italy
6	No	Yes	11-12 month	La Ferté sous Jouarre, France

7	Yes	Yes	7-8 month	Belgium, Bruxelles
8	No	Yes	11-12 month	Germany, Berlin
9	No	No	11-12 month	Bucharest, Romania
10	No	No	7-8 month	Germany, Bad Brückenau
11	No	No	2-4 month	Graz, Austria
12	No	No	11-12 month	Moldova, Chisinau
13	No	No	11-12 month	Germany, Freiburg
14	No	No	9-10 month	Italy, Lake Idro
15	No	No	11-12 month	Munich, Germany
16	No	No	11-12 month	Ireland, stonyford
17	No	No	5-6 month	Jordan, Amman
18	Yes	No	7-8 month	Lviv, Ukraine
19	No	Yes	9-10 month	France, vélizy-villacoublay
20	No	No	5-6 month	Baku, Azerbaijan
21	No	No	9-10 month	Bulgaria - Sofia
22	No	No	11-12 month	Czech Republic
23	No	No	11-12 month	Romania, Arad
24	No	No	9-10 month	Belgrade, Serbia.
25	No	No	5-6 month	Bangor, Northern Ireland
26	No	No	9-10 month	Cluj-Napoca, Romania
27	No	No	11-12 month	England, Beaulieu
28	No	Yes	9-10 month	Murcia, Spain
29	No	Yes	11-12 month	Germany, Berlin
30	No	No	11-12 month	France, Étables-sur-Mer
31	Yes	No	Less than 2 month	Zagreb, Croatia
32	No	No	11-12 month	Nidda, Germany
33	No	No	11-12 month	France, Montendre
34	No	Yes	11-12 month	Germany, Berlin
35	No	No	11-12 month	France, Beauvoisin
36	Yes	Yes	9-10 month	Madrid, Spain
37	No	No	11-12 month	Armenia, Yerevan

38	No	No	5-6 month	Spain/Ourense
39	No	Yes	9-10 month	France, Lyon
40	No	No	11-12 month	England, Newcastle upon Tyne
41	No	Yes	11-12 month	Germany Berlin
42	No	No	9-10 month	baia mare, romania
43	Yes	No	9-10 month	Jordan, Amman
44	No	No	11-12 month	Pozuelo de Alarcon, Madrid, Spain
45	No	No	11-12 month	Beaulieu, England
46	No	No	9-10 month	Austria, Salzburg
47	No	No	11-12 month	Germany, Marquartstein
48	Yes	No	5-6 month	Spain, Frómista (tiny village)
49	Yes	No	Less than 2 month	Turkey, mugla
50	No	No	5-6 month	Amman, Jordan
51	No	No	5-6 month	Spain, Tarragona
52	Yes	No	2-4 month	Germany, Reut (Bayern)
53	No	No	9-10 month	Morocco, Agadir (Ait Melloul)
54	No	No	9-10 month	Stara Lubovna, Slovakia
55	Yes	No	5-6 month	Austria, Wien
56	Yes	Yes	5-6 month	Spain, pamplona
57	No	No	9-10 month	A Coruña
58	No	No	11-12 month	Portugal, Amarante
59	Yes	No	2-4 month	Poland, Piekary Slauskie
60	No	No	11-12 month	Hannover, Germany
61	No	No	5-6 month	Azerbaijan, Baku

Participant no.	10. What was/were the main aim(s) of your EVS project?	11. What was your initial motivation for EVS participation?
1	Learn new things	Wanted to make a difference
2	Study break, professional experience	Study break, going abroad again
3	- Teaching English - Doing administrative work - Awareness of EVS	- Adventure - I have been doing volunteer work before and wanted to do it again

		- Spain as a country - language, culture, etc.
4	I worked in a Youth Center where we organized activities for kids - mainly from a neighboring orphanage. Besides this we taught English in schools and in our center, and we worked on various local environmental projects.	To utilize the amazing offer that is EVS: getting to live in another country without having to save up first.
5	I worked with an environmental association, Legambiente Verona, and participated in their activities. My work was mainly maintaining a park(cutting grass, giving water to the plants, etc) but I also helped in the office, went with the CEA(teaching program) to schools making small workshops with kids, participated in urban trekkings and other things.	I wanted to try to live outside of Denmark and make a new experience on my own so EVS seemed like the perfect opportunity.
6	Alongside four other volunteers, I worked with troubled youngsters who had fallen out of the system and needed help to find their way forward. We participated in renovation/construction/maintenance projects with them, as well as shared daily, collective life. In the summer season, we hosted groups on our site as well as organised International Work Camps in the region (Ile de France).	To do something radically different than I had tried before, thereby challenging myself and my former beliefs/habits/assumptions; to implement myself completely in a new context/country and to learn French.
7	The main aim of my EVS project was to coordinate the logistics around a European Voluntary Summer Summit (VSS) that took place in Bosnia over the summer 2014. The summit brought together more than 200 volunteers from all over Europe and I had to communicate with them making sure that they filled out the application correctly, got confirmed by their national volunteer organisations, and that they had no doubts. Part of this process also involved shaping the event itself by being a part of the preparatory team. The team consisted of me, a colleague from my organisation's office, and four volunteers. We decided on workshops, on the framing of the event, on the programme, and on leisure activities.	I wanted to learn French, learn what it means to work before pursuing a higher education, and develop soft skills and communicational abilities. I think the process is an important step for every individuals development in that it allows you to mature and become more aware of what you want to do with your life. Consequently, I take my higher education much more serious.
8	I wanted to develop myself as a person, and meet people from around the world.	To develop myself as a person, and meet people from around the world.
9	To experience: - working with children - working in an international team - Living in a different frame - Speaking a different language - Having fun and enjoying such a cultural and social experience	To work with children, do something creative and get far away.
10	To learn to speak fluid German and to improve social skills.	To go abroad and do something else than School and to learn a language and get to know myself better.
11	I was a volunteer at a children's rights project. What I thought would be interacting with children, was instead office work, very independent.	To experience a new country, new friends, and to grow as a person.
12	To work with children and travel	I wanted to see something different and live in a different culture than my own. I

		also wanted to meet young people from all over the world.
13	I was working in a Kindergarten/"Vuggestue". I was mainly helping with the children, but I also helped out in the kitchen.	Learning German. Exploring another culture not only by being a tourist. Having an everyday life in another country. Meeting new people.
14	Working at a day care centre for disabled people	I wanted to travel after high school, but I didn't want to work a dead beat job. I had always wanted to learn Italian, so when a project in the north of Italy came up, I grasped the chance
15	Kindergarten - I was taking care of the children in the age 0-6 and making projects and activities with them!	I wanted to live abroad for a year. Learn a new language and another culture and people in it.
16	Assistant in the care of mentally and physical residents	I wanted a gap year but also a great experience while having it
17	To do marketing and promote the company in Jordan and Middle East, furthermore I were teaching English to Palestinian and Syrian Refugees	I wanted to try something new, and get to another area of the world. An area where people always hear bad things from. Furthermore the language was a challenge.
18	<p>Three things:</p> <p>1) Making so called "Euro-clubs" in schools, teaching English and telling the kids about the EU.</p> <p>2) Making activities my hosting organization's Youth Club</p> <p>3) Helping at a L'Arch-center; L'Arch is an organization that works with mentally disabled adults.</p>	<p>I was done with high school and wanted to travel, but I didn't have any money. So instead I did EVS after a friend - who was half a year in Austria - recommended it to me.</p> <p>I decided to use the experience to go somewhere I had never been before, and somewhere I probably wouldn't have visited, had it not been for the EVS.</p>
19	<p>In the project description it said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- informing youth about possibilities for going abroad through EU</li> <li>- personal project</li> <li>- learning/improving french</li> </ul> <p>- eventually helping out with after school english classes.</p> <p>It later turned out that there was nothing to do except the English classes, which tripled during my time against my will.</p>	Gaining experience before starting university, improving French
20	To implement environment activities in Baku. In general do something about environment and ecology in Baku.	To go abroad and somehow make a difference for the people/world through volunteer work. Also to travel, meet new people and experience different cultures.
21	To promote the public library and make it more attractive and interesting for the people to visit and use	I wanted to go abroad before going to university and EVS was a great opportunity to do social work and a very cheap way to go abroad too!
22	Activities for kids after school, like dance class, art class, sport and events.	I wanted to do something very different from my high school, I needed new experiences and I wanted to be a part of a country I didn't know before start.
23	E main aim was to involve the local community in sports activities - mainly running. And then put	Wanted to travel and at the same time get the chance to meet young people

	awareness on different cultures, traditions and lifestyle.	from all over the world... and Evs was the cheapest solution
24	To experience a very different culture, to work with Roma people and to learn about the Balkans.	The experience the Balkans.
25	Conservation of trees native to the British isles, sustainability and knowledge about this. Working in a tree nursery,	Living in an English speaking county, learning about sustainability and doing something completely different than studying, being on my own and getting to know other cultures.
26	Entertaining kids in a hospital	Personal reasons. I just needed to get away.
27	I volunteered at a field study centre, my role was education officer assistant, and I helped teaching kids about the New Forest.	I wanted to have a gap year abroad and I wanted to improve my English.
28	Help other organisations with after-school activities, helping immigrant children with homework, doing administrative work for the organisation (in office), organize events and trips, etc.	To help where there was a person in need, to make a project myself with kids/teenager/or others, to experience another culture and learn another language
29	Gain Intercultural work experience Improve language skills: English and German Improve social skills: networking, socialising and communicating in a foreign language, foreign country, foreign city. How does one make new friends and contacts when being out of ones comfort zone? Where to start, where to go?	I had long been thinking about volunteering for a longer period of time, but hadn't found the right time/place for it. In summer 2014 I finished my bachelor degree in International studies and wanted to use my skills in an international and intercultural setting outside of Denmark. I knew of EVS from friends of mine working for ICYE, and had looked into it before without finding the 'right' project. Then one day, I received an email from Dansk ICYE about a project working within fields related to my area of interest and field of study - it was the perfect match and opportunity.
30	activities with children	learn French, experience a different culture while living there
31	Communication and practical help at C'est is D'Best in Zagreb (street festival)	I had been a volunteer in the Philippines with ICYE, and need something new to do in my gap year, and the office suggested this new project.
32	- Develop my language skills - Develop my personal profile - Become more mature	I have just finished High School, and therefore wanted to gain other experiences. As mentioned above I wanted to develop my skills within the German language, and I really wanted to work with children.
33	It was an inclusion project where volunteers (international and national) and youngsters with different problems lived and worked together. We also worked with excluded social groups fx unemployed and people with disabilities. We had different working projects, mainly physical work (renovation, building etc), environmental projects and educational projects.	I wanted to experience another culture, country, language, people in an interesting, low-cost, meaningful way.

34	Kindergarten-teacher	To get out of my regular routines
35	Preserving cultural heritage and inclusion of young people with social difficulties	To get a better understanding of Europe and to learn French
36	NGO experience, language and culture	Live in Spain, learn and develop as a person
37	To work with children of impoverished and alcoholised homes so that they could have a stable life.	I wanted to take a gap year between high school and university
38	Environmental projects of different kinds	Desire to travel Desire to improve my Spanish Desire to gain experience for my resume
39	I had always wanted to try and live in another country. Also I wanted to get better in French so I really wanted to go to France.	I had been doing other voluntary jobs in Denmark and would like to do some more where EVS became the perfect solution - and then in another country!
40	I was working in a drop-in centre for young homeless people aged 16-24. Here I helped support workers as well as running the drop-in centre, planning and doing activities and trips.	I wanted to travel and stay for a long while in another country, but didn't want to wait and save up money, so EVS was the ideal opportunity.
41	Working in an earlier HIV-kindergarten.	- self development - going abroad - improve my German (and English) - get to know knew People and their culture.
42	Working with children in the age 3-12 - kindergarten, school, workshops and so on. Also having activities with children in the rural area.	To get some experiences for life and for my future studies.
43	Organizing and facilitating different activities in refugee camps and writing project proposal.	Unsure about Master's and this experience could help me decide between two fields of interest.
44	Working with mentally disable grown ups in a day center. - We had dancing classes, theatre, music, textile, candles etc.  To accompany the users in their work	I wanted to experience another culture, language meanwhile living and working abroad.  Work with people.
45	Educating city children on farming and general nature topics. This was through practical farm work and educational activities.	I wanted to have a gap year but it was important to me that I could do some work related to me. This was because i wanted to use it for my application to veterinary medicine. The organisation I worked for had a farm and it gave me the ability to work practically with all kinds of farm animals.
46	I worked in a day-care center mainly with kids of age 6-9	i wanted to travel and experience a new culture and a different way of life
47	Help in social pedagogical group of children in the age between 9-13. Help with homework Assist the pedagogues Arrange activities for the kids Go on trips and help the group as an extra adult Be someone the children could talk to and play with - link between children and adults, not "real" adult somewhere in between.	Improve my language skills. Get an experience in my gap year away from home. Try to live alone and meet new people. Work with children and explore if that was a way I wanted to go for my further education. See more of Europe and meet other volunteers and people.

<b>48</b>	Together with 2 other volunteers, I worked for the culture house and municipality in the village, making activities for children and youth (summer school and workshops), pilgrims on the camino de santiago (tourism office), elderly people (retirement home), small children (kindergarden) and adult (english classes) and in general helped around with events in town and worked more or less as "windows to the bigger world" promoting rural life for young people.	Long-term project, costs covered, project-oriented as oppose to being a 1 month volunteer in an orphanage in Nepal. A good way to learn the language.
<b>49</b>	to organize a local "festival" in the village. The project was with 30 young people from 20 different countries, so I would say that it also aimed to create culture exchange	To travel in a cheap, and NON touristic way, to meet other young people from different countries,
<b>50</b>	My aim was so to try something completely different. Jordan was the perfect place for that! I was curious about the Middle East as it is often portrayed in a negative way in mainstream media, and I wanted to see this region for myself. Furthermore, I liked the tasks of my project as it enabled me to get a feeling of life in a refugee camp, something I had no idea of previous my departure, and learn more about the idiosyncrasies of Jordanian life.	To be able to live abroad without having to work for ages to be able to afford it! I thought volunteering was a great way of learning about a different culture and meet other young Europeans.
<b>51</b>	I was working in a residence for old people. I was part of the activity team, and I assisted in all activities in mornings and afternoons. The activities were music therapy, animal therapy, handcraft, theatre, reading the newspaper, morning gymnastics/movement etc.	Learning the language and culture.
<b>52</b>	Helping troubled youth through aikido	Travelling, gaining new experiences
<b>53</b>	Intergenerational Solidarity I worked at a nursing home for elderly	To go abroad and being a part of a local community far from my own culture, and to do that without spending a lot of money
<b>54</b>	Working with children at a Leisure time center (CVC)	A new experience
<b>55</b>	I was working in volunteer based radiostation and helped with the administration and dayli running of the station.	I loved the idea of getting to really know a another culture and try to work full time to see what that was like.
<b>56</b>	Life experience. Learn Spanish. New perspectives.	Start a new life I guess.
<b>57</b>	Assisting in a nursery home for elderly mainly suffering from dementia or other types of mentally diseases	I wanted a change, to travel alone and "stand on my own two legs".ALso I wanted to improve my spanish.
<b>58</b>	Social work	To learn another language
<b>59</b>	General help in a library and for example play with kids or teach Danish/english.	I wanted to challenge my self and experience something new and different.
<b>60</b>	Working in a environmental organisation, together with another indigenous guy, we travelled to make presentations about our cultures and to talk about climate change, besides participating and hosting in seminars our organisation arranges.	To travel and learn another language

<b>61</b>	"Youth protect the environment" - though we never saw much of that.	Wanting to come out and see the world in a cheap manner. Azerbaijan was chosen for being one the countries furthest away on the list.
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<b>Participant no.</b>	<b>12. Did you have any regions, countries or cities where you preferred to do your EVS project?</b>	<b>13. Please specify the regions, countries or cities which you preferred.</b>	<b>14. Was the country where you did your EVS project your FIRST choice?</b>	<b>15. Were there any regions, countries or cities in which you preferred NOT to do your EVS project?</b>	<b>16. Please specify the region/regions, countries or cities in which you preferred NOT to do your EVS</b>	<b>17. What was the most important aspect in choosing your EVS programme?</b>
<b>1</b>	No			Not sure		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>2</b>	Yes	Spain	Yes	No		The project topic was the most important to me.
<b>3</b>	Yes	Spain	Yes	No		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>4</b>	Yes	South America and Eastern Europe	Yes	No		The destination was the most important to me.
<b>5</b>	Yes	Italy and France	Yes	No		The destination was the most important to me.
<b>6</b>	Yes	French speaking countries	Yes	Yes	Not-french speaking countries	The destination was the most important to me.
<b>7</b>	Yes	The Middle East	No	Yes	Scandinavia	The project topic was the most

						important to me.
8	No			No		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
9	Not sure			No		The project topic was the most important to me.
10	Yes	Germany	Yes	Yes	Baltic countries, spain and romania	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
11	Yes	Since I already knew some German, I preferred a German speaking country, so the language barrier wouldn't be so difficult.	No	Yes	I also got an offer in Albanian (I believe it was). I was very sceptical since it's so 'far away'.	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
12	No			No		The project topic was the most important to me.
13	Yes	Germany, Berlin.	Yes	Yes	In countries where they don't speak German	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
14	Yes	Italy, France	Yes	Yes	Eastern Europe	The destination was the most important to me.
15	No			Yes	Germany - because of the language but I ended up there and loved it	The project topic was the most important to me.
16	No			Yes	Scandinavian countries	The destination

						and the project topic were equally important to me:
17	Yes	Middle East	Yes	Yes	Europe, because its a little bit easier to volunteer in Europe, because it doesn't take visa	The project topic was the most important to me.
18	Yes	I didn't want to go anywhere I had been before, and I thought there was something interesting about Eastern Europe. Initially I wanted to go to Russia, but there weren't any good projects, so I started looking in Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Ukraine.	No	Yes	I did not want to go where everybody else went, so countries like England, Spain and Italy was a no-go for me.	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
19	Yes		Yes	Yes	Anything other than the Parisian region	The destination was the most important to me.
20	Yes	Spain or france.	No	Yes	Germany and skandinavian countries	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
21	Not sure	Denmark		No		The project topic was the most important to me.
22	Yes	Spain, Italy and France	No	Yes	Poland, Baltic	The project topic was the most important to me.
23	No		No	Yes	Germany	The destination

						and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>24</b>	Yes	The Balkans	Yes	Yes	Western Europe	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>25</b>	Yes	Great Britain + Ireland	Yes	Yes	Eastern Europe	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>26</b>	Not sure		No	Yes	Scandinavia	The project topic was the most important to me.
<b>27</b>	Yes	England, London	Yes	Yes	Germany, East Europe.	The destination was the most important to me.
<b>28</b>	Yes	Spain, southern part of the country	Yes	Yes	eastern Europe, north of Europe	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>29</b>	Yes	German or English speaking countries; ie. England or Germany	Yes	Not sure		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>30</b>	Yes	France	Yes	Not sure		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>31</b>	Not sure			No		The project topic was the most important to me.
<b>32</b>	Yes	Germany or Great Britain	Yes	Yes	Romania, Italy, Spain, Portugal	The destination

						and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>33</b>	Yes	France	Yes	Yes	I was not interested in Eastern European countries at that time.	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>34</b>	Not sure			Not sure		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>35</b>	Yes	France, Belgium and Luxemburg	Yes	No		The destination was the most important to me.
<b>36</b>	Yes	Spain	Yes	Yes	Outside Spain	The destination was the most important to me.
<b>37</b>	Yes	eastern europe	Yes	No		The destination was the most important to me.
<b>38</b>	Yes	Spain	Yes	Yes	Any other than Spain	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>39</b>	Yes	France, England, Ireland	Yes	No		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
<b>40</b>	Yes	Mainly England and Spain because I wanted to be able to have a basic knowledge of the language.	No	Not sure		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:

41	Yes			Not sure		The project topic was the most important to me.
42	Not sure			Not sure		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
43	Yes	Middle East	Yes	Yes	Europe	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
44	Yes	Southern Europe	Yes	No	Denmark	The project topic was the most important to me.
45	Yes	England, Holland, Belgium, Iceland...	Yes	No		The project topic was the most important to me.
46	No			Yes	the most east part of Europe	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
47	Yes	1) Germany, 2) Austria, 3) Scotland - mainly southern Germany, because I wanted to get away and see something more different than the northern part would be	Yes	Yes	Bigger cities	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
48	Yes	Spain	Yes	No	Denmark	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:

49	Not sure		Yes	Not sure		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
50	Yes	Spain, Portugal, Caucasus, The Middle East,	No	Yes	Northern Europe, Central Europe.	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
51	Yes	Spain	No	Yes	Sweden and Norway	The destination was the most important to me.
52	Yes		Yes	No		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
53	Yes	Outside of Europe or Eastern Europe	Yes	Yes	Western-European countries	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
54	No			No		The project topic was the most important to me.
55	Yes		Yes	Yes	I wanted to use my German so I was mainly looking for German speaking countries.	The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
56	Yes	Scotland, Ireland, Spain, England	No	No		The project topic was the most important to me.
57	Yes	Spain	Yes	Not sure		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:

58	Yes	Spain or Portugal	No	Yes	Only wanted to go to Spain or Portugal	The destination was the most important to me.
59	No			No		The destination and the project topic were equally important to me:
60	No			No		The project topic was the most important to me.
61	Yes	Caucasus	Yes	Not sure		The destination was the most important to me.

Participant no.	18. AFTER your EVS experience: How did your perceptions about the destination (country) of your EVS project change?	19. Have you recommended the EVS programme to others?	20. After your EVS experience you...
1	Yes	No	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
2	Spain seems to have so many different cultures and customs within the country just travelling 20 km in one direction.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
3	I have been to Spain a lot - also before doing my EVS. I guess I learned even more about the culture, the people and the language. I came to see Spain in a different (and very positive) way.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once
4	I've lost some prejudice and reinforced other. Yes, there are a lot of Roma in Romania, and yes there is thorough political corruption. On the other hand, I have never felt unwelcome there, and I find people to be extremely friendly.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
5	Getting to know the culture and language of the place of course change a lot about what you think of the place but I am not able to come with a specific example.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once

6	I have a far deeper understanding of the French culture than I did before, as well as insight in the similarities and differences between Denmark and France. I was perhaps most implemented in a sub-culture via my commitment to a large association with dedicated idealists surrounding me, why my perception of France in general may be biased, but I did meet many aspects of French culture, that both resembled Danish ways more than I'd assumed, and other that were quite different. Especially the close relationship many French feel with the French revolution and the importance of what the French fought for back in 1789 seems for a Dane quite outstanding, but nevertheless it fortifies the bonds that tie together all French people, native as immigrants, who all identify themselves through those values.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once
7	A part from getting to know my host city and country better, I got a more elaborate view of the complexities within the European union and within Belgium itself. I became highly aware of the French/Spanish influence and the influence of the European Union that segregates the locals from the internationals. Most importantly, being situation at the head quarters of EU, I got to know the insurmountable aims that the union builds on, the beauty in its ideals, and the difficulties and complexities in its undertakings.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once
8	It didn't change.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
9	In a lot of ways. I knew nothing about Romania whatsoever, I had no relation to the country and no knowledge about it. After a year, I knew not only the city of Bucharest, I knew other places too that I visited. I knew how they interacted, I got used to their mentality and, in general, their way of living. I partly got to understand how come they do like they do, and think like they think, as I lived, breathed, heard, saw and felt the city, the country and its history.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
10	I did not have many perceptions about Germany before I Went there.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
11	I was very surprised to learn that not many people spoke English. Actually, I	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you

	would be surprised if I just found one that spoke English! There were many beggars in the streets, which really surprised me. But a very big and beautiful country.		plan/want to travel back for a revisit
12	I had no expectations before my arrival and I knew nothing about Moldova except that they spoke Romanian. So you could say that I got perceptions during my stay. :-)	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project again
13	Afterwards I am happy I didn't end up in Berlin, the place everyone goes when they visit Germany. It was nice to see another/"real" side of Germany, and I learnt that Germany has many nice cities other than Berlin.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
14	I had already travelled a lot in Italy, so I had an idea of what i was getting myself into. But it's always weird when it's a familiar country, because then the culture clash takes longer to hit you. But there was definitely something about the roles of the sexes that were strange to me	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
15	I love Germany and the language and the people!!! It was so great to end up there!	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once
16	Turned more negative	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
17	It changed to the good, Im going back some day and no matter how many bad news I hear about Middle East and Jordan, I have my own impression now.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
18	My EVS wasn't always the greatest experience, but I have appreciated the trip a lot more after I came home. I miss Ukraine. I miss the funny customs, the people of Ukraine who are some of the sweetest, most helpful and heart filled people ever, and I miss the adventure that follows an EVS-project.  I didn't know much about Ukraine when I got there, but I learned a lot and I have followed Ukraine closely in the media since I got back home; especially with all the troubles and protests in Kyiv last year, when they wanted to overthrow Janukovich. I have even started studying Ukrainian again!  So I guess my picture of Ukraine is much more 'pink and fluffy' now than it was before. I remember everything to be a lot nicer than it probably was, but	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit

	that's okay. I will never get my EVS back, but Ukraine will always be a beautiful and interesting country, and I'm planning on going back next summer (:		
19	They did not, i had already lived in france for a year and can back with the same impressions of the country.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project again
20	Azerbaijan is a very special country and i wouldn't recommend anybody to go there. Though is was still a good personal experience to see a eastern country. Also it is my perception that many evs projects are unserious, and organisations taking evs participants not really want to do a serious project and care about the evs participants. it's like organisations only do evs projects for show of and to get a higher value as a organisation. This is not only what i experienced, but also what i heard from other evs participants. I'm sure some organizations are serious about evs, but surely there need to be more control with the projects.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project again
21	I came to find that Bulgaria was a country full of contrasts. Sofia and the bigger cites developing into modern European cities while the countryside was a little more like a picture from the past. But not anything like the poor gypsie country I had imagined :)	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
22	I didn't know anything about the country before, but after I feel I know the country better than anyone. I found out how different the Czech people are doing anything compared to Denmark.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
23	It completely changed, I got to explore a country I never imagined I would ever see. I fell in love with Romania and completely changed my perspective on eastern Europe.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
24	I have a much more nuanced view of the Balkans, and it is one of my favorite places to travel to.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
25	I didn't really know Northern Ireland, it's such a diverse part of the UK and has got loads of treasures I didn't know about. I've been back there as well	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once
26	Before, I knew nothing about Romania. After, I loved the country.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
27	I realized that I new very little about England before living there compared to after. People think of London when they hear the word England, but England is so much more than the	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once

	capital! The beautiful nature is what makes England amazing, and I had know idea about that before living there!		
<b>28</b>	very welcoming and lovable people and culture in Spain.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
<b>29</b>	I have German family and grew up close to the border, but after spending a year here, it became my city - just as much as any Danish city I've lived in. I understand more of the political landscape, culture and social setting (and how every city has its own characteristics and culture - e.g. Berlin being very multicultural, struggling with local vs. rich investors, foreigners and the tourist industry). My prejudices and stereotypes both of the host country changed; Germany is much more than October Fest and schnitzel - Berlin for instance has an inspiring start-up scene, is filled with people showing initiative that are keen on networking. I found better opportunities for me here, found that I feel more at home in an multi-cultural setting and decided to stay after my EVS ended.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once
<b>30</b>	changed on a small scale, learned a lot about everyday life in France and the everyday life for children living in France	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
<b>31</b>	I have only seen the vacation cities by the sea in Croatia, and it was very nice to see the capital. I was a bit surprised it wasn't more modern or "evolved". it was kinda like Aarhus in size, and people were friendly, but not very good at English, which kinda schoked me.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
<b>32</b>	My EVS was perfect for me. I really enjoyed the German culture, and my project was very very interesting.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
<b>33</b>	I feel now a bit of ownership /personal connection to the country, and a love for the French culture. I'm very happy that I chose France, but I also realized during my EVS that the country of choice wasn't important to experience what I had. It really didn't matter which country I was sent to, I think every country (depending on the specific projects) could have given incredible experiences. After the EVS I have been a lot more open to travel and appreciate the eastern European countries.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit

<b>34</b>	I knew the language and the city a little better	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once
<b>35</b>	I got a deeper understanding of the cultural similarities and differences between my culture and the French	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once
<b>36</b>	I knew the country well beforehand and spoke the language, so my EVS was a chance to let my knowledge grow, but basic perceptions stayed the same.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
<b>37</b>	I learned a lot about a country in development and learned that eastern Europe is not so different from the west	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
<b>38</b>	That's a big question.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
<b>39</b>	After having spend 10 months in France I had become more aware of the cultural differences but also the similarities. It's interesting to experience living in another country and learn the language as this is a very important way to understand the people speaking this language. I feel more attached to France after my stay and feel like the stay has made me understand the world in a new and greater perspective.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
<b>40</b>	I found out that the English culture is more complex than I realised to begin with -it's not really like danish culture at all. Also it's a little like having a second home country/city.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
<b>41</b>	- i have got a deeper perspective to both the cultural, historical, and political part of the country. - i have realised that even a EU-country can have serious problems as well as the rest of the World.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
<b>42</b>	It changed in that way, that my perceptions before I went to Romania, either got confirmed or I figured out it was not correct, and today I have a very good relation to the country, it's nature and so on.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
<b>43</b>	Not much, but if I had to mention something it would be a deeper understanding the diversity among the population - especially among the young people.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once
<b>44</b>	I saw Spain as a lot more than just beaches and hot weather. It contains so much culture, diversity in nature and the people.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once

45	It all felt very foreign when I got there. It was very different from what I'm used to but there was also a lot of cultural similarities. By the end of the year it felt like home and I had a hard time imagining my life back in Denmark. It was like when I got there, the two countries had just been swapped. I felt like I belonged.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
46	not so much, i expected the culture to be similar in many ways and it was, it was the friends i made that I miss, not the place	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
47	Way more positive. My experience gave me a new outlook on home as well as the country I stayed in. Friendly people, not necessarily living up to old stereotypes about how Germans are.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
48	I had only experienced the touristy side of the country. I ended up spending a half year in the tiniest village long away from Costa del Sol, Madrid and Barcelona and had the best time. Definitely found out that Spanish people can not be put into one category :-)	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
49	I didn't know much about the country before. After : I really loved the atmosphere and the people there.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
50	A gained a broader understanding of how diverse Jordan is and that the news only tell a minor part of reality. Things are not as black-white as they might seem when sitting back home in Europe.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
51	I was very surprised to experience how Catalonia is different (wants to be different) from the rest of Spain.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
52	Not greatly. Bavaria is like the face of Germany to foreigners.	No	Never visited the destination of your EVS project again
53	I did not know a lot about Morocco before going there, but a lot of my imaginations of Muslim countries have changed. I experienced a very open culture and I now see that a lot of the Western (Danish) prejudgments about Islam is misguided	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once
54	I have visited Slovakia many time after, i love that country.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once
55	I'd only been skiing in Austria before so it something new and exiting to learn their real culture that is so much more than funny "costumes" and after	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once

	ski.. So much history and culture i had no idea existed. Going back this weekend ;)		
<b>56</b>	I figured that after all the host country was very similar to my own country, and that the cultural differences were those important nuances that made the experience colourful and worth the effort.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project once
<b>57</b>	I learned that Spain has a lot more culture than I thought, and that the people are mostly kind.	Yes	Have visited the destination of your EVS project more than once
<b>58</b>	I for sure feel a connection with the country and the city now.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project again
<b>59</b>	Poland is a great country and people in the major towns are very open, but it's difficult to be a foreigner in the small cities	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
<b>60</b>	more cultural understanding to Germans	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project but you plan/want to travel back for a revisit
<b>61</b>	I knew nothing of Azerbaijan. Absolutely nothing. Now I have a faint idea of what kind of country it is. But I will never completely get it. I don't think Azerbaijan is the kind of country you can just figure out.	Yes	Never visited the destination of your EVS project again

## **8.3 Appendix 3a: General interview guide**

### **Before EVS project**

#### **Prior travel experience**

- What was your travel experience before you started at your EVS project?
  - Where to and for how long did you travel?
  - Purpose of travel?

#### **EVS and destination preference**

- What made you choose the EVS programme rather than any other volunteer programme abroad?
- Why did you choose your specific EVS project destination?

#### **Collected or received information about your destination before arrival at project destination**

- Did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about your EVS project destination before your arrival?
  - From where did you collect or receive information about your destination?

### **During EVS project**

#### **Interaction with locals**

- Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed your perceptions about your project destination?

#### **Interaction with other international EVS volunteers at your project**

- In case you had the chance to work together with other international volunteers, did you exchange perceptions about each other's countries?
  - Did your perceptions about the other volunteers' home countries change?
    - How did your perceptions change?

### **Travel during your EVS project**

- How much did you travel during your EVS project?
  - What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS experience?

### **After EVS project**

#### **Preparation and evaluation seminars**

- What effect if any do you feel that the different EVS preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of your EVS project destination?

## **8.4 Appendix 3b: Interview guide – Anders**

### **Interview guide**

#### **Participant no. 4 (Anders)**

### **Before EVS project**

#### **Prior travel experience**

- What was your travel experience before you started at your EVS project?
  - Where to and for how long did you travel?
  - Purpose of travel?

#### **EVS and destination preference**

- What made you choose the EVS programme rather than any other volunteer programme abroad?
- In the survey, you mention that the destination was the most important to you when choosing your programme. Why is that?

- What is the reason why you preferred Eastern Europe or South America above other regions?
- Why did you choose Romania as your EVS project destination?

### **Collected or received information about your destination before arrival at project destination**

- Did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about Romania before your arrival?
  - From where did you collect or receive information about your destination?

### **During EVS project**

#### **Interaction with locals**

- Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed your perceptions about Romania?

#### **Interaction with other international EVS volunteers at your project**

- In case you had the chance to work together with other international volunteers, did you exchange perceptions about each other's countries?
  - Did your perceptions about the other volunteers' home countries change?
    - How did your perceptions change?

#### **Travel during your EVS project**

- How much did you travel during your EVS project?
  - What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS experience?

### **After EVS project**

#### **Preparation and evaluation seminars**

- What effect if any do you feel that the different EVS preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of your specific EVS project destination?

## **8.5 Appendix 3c: Interview guide – Rikke**

### **Interview guide**

#### **Participant no. 6 (Rikke)**

#### **Before EVS project**

##### **Prior travel experience**

- You mention in the survey that you visited the area of your EVS project before your EVS experience;
  - What was the purpose of the travel, and for how long did you stay?
  - How would you describe your perceptions about the area before your EVS experience?

##### **EVS preference**

- What made you choose the EVS programme rather than any other volunteer programme abroad?

#### **Collected or received information about your destination before arrival at project destination**

- Did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about your EVS project destination before your arrival?
  - From where did you collect or receive information about your destination?

#### **During EVS project**

##### **Interaction with locals**

- Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed your perceptions about your project destination?

##### **Interaction with other international EVS volunteers at your project**

- You mention in the survey that you worked together with four other volunteers:
  - Were they all internationals?
  - Did you exchange perceptions about each other's countries?
  - Did your perceptions about the other volunteers' home countries change?

- How did your perceptions change?

### **Travel during your EVS project**

- How much did you travel during your EVS project?
  - What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS experience?

### **After EVS project**

#### **Preparation and evaluation seminars**

- What effect if any do you feel that the different EVS preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of your specific EVS project destination?

## **8.6 Appendix 3d: Interview guide – Nanna**

### **Interview guide**

#### **Participant no. 15 (Nanna)**

### **Before EVS project**

#### **Prior travel experience**

- What was your travel experience before you started at your EVS project?
  - Where to and for how long did you travel?
  - Purpose of travel?

#### **EVS and destination preference**

- What made you choose the EVS programme rather than any other volunteer programme abroad?

- Why did you choose Germany as your specific EVS project destination, even though Germany was the country that you initially sought to avoid?

### **Collected or received information about your destination before arrival at project destination**

- Did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about your EVS project destination before your arrival?
  - From where did you collect or receive information about your destination?

### **Perceptions about destination prior to arrival**

- What was your perception about Germany before your arrival at your EVS project?

## **During EVS project**

### **Interaction with locals**

- Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed your perceptions about your specific project destination (Germany)?

### **Interaction with other international EVS volunteers at your project**

- In case you had the chance to work together with other international volunteers, did you exchange perceptions about each other's countries?
  - Did your perceptions about the other volunteers' home countries change?
    - How did your perceptions change?

### **Travel during your EVS project**

- How much did you travel during your EVS project?
  - What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS experience?

## **After EVS project**

### **Preparation and evaluation seminars**

- What effect if any do you feel that the different EVS preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of your EVS project destination?

## **8.7 Appendix 3e: Interview guide – Camilla**

### **Interview guide**

#### **Participant no. 22 (Camilla)**

#### **Before EVS project**

##### **Prior travel experience**

- What was your travel experience before you started at your EVS project?
  - Where to and for how long did you travel?
  - Purpose of travel?

##### **EVS and destination preference**

- What made you choose the EVS programme rather than any other volunteer programme abroad?
- You mention in the survey that your preferred EVS destinations initially was Spain, Italy and France.
  - What was the reason for this?
- Why did you choose Czech Republic even though it was not your first choice destination?
- You mention in the survey that you preferred not to do your project in Poland and the Baltic countries.
  - What is the reason for this?

##### **Collected or received information about your destination before arrival at project destination**

- Did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about your EVS project destination before your arrival?
  - From where did you collect or receive information about your destination?

#### **During EVS project**

##### **About the project**

- You mention in the survey that you made activities with children after school. Could you please explain in more detail about your EVS project.

- What were your main tasks?

### **Interaction with locals**

- Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed your perceptions about your project destination, Czech Republic?

### **Interaction with other international EVS volunteers at your project**

- In case you had the chance to work together with other international volunteers, did you exchange perceptions about each other's countries?
  - Did your perceptions about the other volunteers' home countries change?
    - How did your perceptions change?

### **Travel during your EVS project**

- How much did you travel during your EVS project?
  - What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS experience?

### **After EVS project**

#### **Preparation and evaluation seminars**

- What effect if any do you feel that the different EVS preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of your EVS project destination?

## **8.8 Appendix 3f: Interview guide – Gitte**

### **Interview guide**

#### **Participant no. 27 (Gitte)**

### **Before EVS project**

#### **Prior travel experience**

- What was your travel experience before you started at your EVS project?

- Where to and for how long did you travel?
- Purpose of travel?

### **EVS and destination preference**

- What made you choose the EVS programme rather than any other volunteer programme abroad?
- What was the reason why you did not prefer Germany and Eastern Europe as your EVS destinations?
- What was the reason why you initially preferred London, rather than any other destination?

### **Collected or received information about your destination before arrival at project destination**

- Did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about your EVS project destination before your arrival?
  - From where did you collect or receive information about your destination?

### **During EVS project**

#### **Interaction with locals**

- Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed your perceptions about your project destination?

#### **Interaction with other international EVS volunteers at your project**

- In case you had the chance to work together with other international volunteers, did you exchange perceptions about each other's countries?
  - Did your perceptions about the other volunteers' home countries change?
    - How did your perceptions change?

#### **Travel during your EVS project**

- How much did you travel during your EVS project?
  - What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS experience?

## **After EVS project**

### **Preparation and evaluation seminars**

- What effect if any do you feel that the different EVS preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of your specific EVS project destination?

## **8.9 Appendix 3g: Interview guide – Cecilie**

### **Interview guide**

#### **Participant no. 31 (Cecilie)**

### **Before EVS project**

#### **Prior travel experience**

- You mention in the survey that you participated in a volunteer project in the Philippines before your EVS experience.
  - Could you tell a bit more about this project.
- What other travel experience did you have before you started at your EVS project?
  - Where to and for how long did you travel?
  - Purpose of travel?

#### **EVS and destination preference**

- Why did you choose a project that lasted for less than two month?
- Why did you choose Croatia as your specific EVS project destination?
  - Why did you choose Zagreb?

#### **Collected or received information about your destination before arrival at project destination**

- Did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about your EVS project destination before your arrival?
  - From where did you collect or receive information about your destination?

## **During EVS project**

### **About the project**

- You mention in the survey that you worked with communication and practical help at a street festival.
  - Could you explain a bit more about your project.

### **Interaction with locals**

- Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed your perceptions about your project destination?

### **Other perceptions**

- You mention in the survey that you were surprised that the capital Zagreb wasn't more modern.
  - Can you explain a bit more about this.

### **Interaction with other international EVS volunteers at your project**

- In case you had the chance to work together with other international volunteers, did you exchange perceptions about each other's countries?
  - Did your perceptions about the other volunteers' home countries change?
    - How did your perceptions change?

### **Travel during your EVS project**

- How much did you travel during your EVS project?
  - What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS experience?

## **After EVS project**

### **Preparation and evaluation seminars**

- What effect if any do you feel that the different EVS preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of your EVS project destination?

## **8.10 Appendix 3h: Interview guide – Frederikke**

### **Interview guide**

#### **Participant no. 33 (Frederikke)**

#### **Before EVS project**

##### **Prior travel experience**

- What was your travel experience before you started at your EVS project?
  - Where to and for how long did you travel?
  - Purpose of travel?

##### **EVS and destination preference**

- What made you choose the EVS programme rather than any other volunteer programme abroad?
- You mention in the survey that your preferred destination was France,
  - Why did you initially prefer France above other EVS project destinations?
- You also mention that you initially preferred not to do your project in Eastern European countries,
  - Why?
  - Why did you appreciate the Eastern European countries more after your EVS?

##### **Collected or received information about your destination before arrival at project destination**

- Did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about your EVS project destination before your arrival?
  - From where did you collect or receive information about your destination?

#### **During EVS project**

##### **Interaction with locals**

- Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed your perceptions about your specific project destination, France?

### **Interaction with other international EVS volunteers at your project**

- In case you had the chance to work together with other international volunteers, did you exchange perceptions about each other's countries?
  - Did your perceptions about the other volunteers' home countries change?
    - How did your perceptions change?

### **Travel during your EVS project**

- How much did you travel during your EVS project?
  - What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS experience?

### **After EVS project**

#### **Preparation and evaluation seminars**

- What effect if any do you feel that the different EVS preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of your EVS project destination?

## **8.11 Appendix 3i: Interview guide – Clara**

### **Interview guide**

#### **Participant no. 48 (Clara)**

### **Before EVS project**

#### **Prior travel experience**

- What was your travel experience before you started at your EVS project?
  - Where to and for how long did you travel?
  - Purpose of travel?

### **EVS destination preference**

- Why did you choose Spain as your specific EVS project destination?

### **Collected or received information about your destination before arrival at project destination**

- Did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about your EVS project destination before your arrival?
  - From where did you collect or receive information about your destination?

### **During EVS project**

#### **Interaction with locals**

- Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed your perceptions about your project destination?

#### **Interaction with other international EVS volunteers at your project**

- In case you had the chance to work together with other international volunteers, did you exchange perceptions about each other's countries?
  - Did your perceptions about the other volunteers' home countries change?
    - How did your perceptions change?

#### **Travel during your EVS project**

- How much did you travel during your EVS project?
  - What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS experience?

### **After EVS project**

#### **Preparation and evaluation seminars**

- What effect if any do you feel that the different EVS preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of your EVS project destination?

## **8.12 Appendix 3j: Interview guide – Julie**

### **Interview guide**

#### **Participant no. 50 (Julie)**

#### **Before EVS project**

##### **Prior travel experience**

- What was your travel experience before you started at your EVS project?
  - Where to and for how long did you travel?
  - Purpose of travel?

##### **EVS and destination preference**

- What made you choose the EVS programme rather than any other volunteer programme abroad?
- You mention in the survey that your preferred destinations were Spain, Portugal, the area of Caucasus and the Middle East:
  - Why these destinations?
- You also mention in the survey that your final EVS destination, Jordan, was not your first choice:
  - Which destination was initially your first choice and why?
- Why did you in the end choose Jordan as your specific EVS project destination?
- What was the reason why you did not prefer destinations like Northern and Central Europe?

##### **Collected or received information about your destination before arrival at project destination**

- Did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about your EVS project destination before your arrival?
  - From where did you collect or receive information about your destination?

#### **During EVS project**

##### **About the project**

- You mention in the survey that you worked at a refugee camp:

- What more exactly did you work with? What were your main task at the refugee camp?

### **Interaction with locals**

- Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed your perceptions about your project destination?

### **Interaction with other international EVS volunteers at your project**

- In case you had the chance to work together with other international volunteers, did you exchange perceptions about each other's countries?
  - Did your perceptions about the other volunteers' home countries change?
    - How did your perceptions change?

### **Travel during your EVS project**

- How much did you travel during your EVS project?
  - What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS experience?

## **After EVS project**

### **Preparation and evaluation seminars**

- What effect if any do you feel that the different EVS preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of your EVS project destination?

## **8.13 Appendix 3k: Interview guide - Sofie**

### **Interview guide**

#### **Participant no. 53 (Sofie)**

#### **Before EVS project**

##### **Prior travel experience**

- What was your travel experience before you started at your EVS project?
  - Where to and for how long did you travel?
  - Purpose of travel?

##### **EVS and destination preference**

- What made you choose the EVS programme rather than any other volunteer programme abroad?
- Why did you choose Morocco as your specific EVS project destination?
  - Why did you prefer Eastern European countries and countries outside of Europe?
  - What was the reason why you specifically did not prefer Western European countries?

##### **Collected or received information about your destination before arrival at project destination**

- Did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about your EVS project destination before your arrival?
  - From where did you collect or receive information about your destination?

#### **During EVS project**

##### **Your project**

- You mentioned in the survey that the aims of your project included intergenerational solidarity and that you worked at a nursing home for elderly. Could you please describe your project in more details.

##### **Interaction with locals**

- Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed your perceptions about your project destination?

### **Interaction with other international EVS volunteers at your project**

- In case you had the chance to work together with other international volunteers, did you exchange perceptions about each other's countries?
  - Did your perceptions about the other volunteers' home countries change?
    - How did your perceptions change?

### **Travel during your EVS project**

- How much did you travel during your EVS project?
  - What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS experience?

## **After EVS project**

### **Preparation and evaluation seminars**

- What effect if any do you feel that the different EVS preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of your EVS project destination?

## **8.14 Appendix 4a: Interview – Participant no. 4 (Anders)**

**Date for the conduction of the interview:** 25-11-2015

**Name of the interviewee:** Anders

**Destination of EVS project:** Băile Tuşnad, Romania

**Length of stay:** 9-10 month

Interviewer So, first question about your travel experience before the EVS programme. What was your travel experience before you started your EVS project, and where to did you travel, for how long and with what purpose?

Anders I travelled quite a lot I think to European destinations with my family. Then after high school, I worked to save up money, and I went to South America twice. First time I was two month in Chile with two friends, and the year after I was travelling around for four month with a friend backpacking. And I've also done interrail.

Interviewer Then on your EVS and destination preference. What made you choose the EVS programme, rather than any other volunteer programme?

Anders Ok, well that was easy because everything is paid. That is such a great opportunity, you don't need to save up money or anything. And I also have a friend who has done it, so I knew about it before.

Interviewer Ok. What did he tell you about it?

Anders Well, just that he... just about what a unique experience it is and so on... that he had had a great experience.

Interviewer Where did he go to?

Anders He went to Roskilde [Denmark]

Interviewer Ok. You mention in the survey that the destination was the most important to you when choosing your programme. Why is that?

Anders So, it's a bit of a special story. I went on a... do you know the Youth in Action short programmes?

Interviewer Yeah, I've heard about it but maybe you could explain it a bit.

Anders Yes. So it all started with friend saying "hey, would you like to go to Moldova for ten days on a training course, where you only pay ten percent of the flight ticket". And it just fitted perfectly with my schedule. I thought it was great that you have this training course in communication and presentation. Apart from that... when you go on these courses, you also hear about the European Union started programmes, and that's why I knew about the EVS before... but now I really considered. And then I learned the details [about the EVS programme]. Ok, and so... the things is that it had more to do with my schedule than the destination actually. When I came home from Moldova I went to AFS, the Danish [sending] organisation because they had a presentation about the EVS. And so... if I wanted to go after the summer, it was some years ago, then due to the [application] deadlines I could only choose between two destinations Armenia and Romania. Because of my stay in Moldova, I had already met a lot of Romanians there, so yeah I just know that would be cool. So, it is... I mean it was one of the destinations where I liked to go because I knew some Romanians, and I knew that the language... I would be able to learn it there. But it wasn't like the place I preferred in the whole world.

Interviewer Ok. What other destinations would you have preferred?

Anders Outside of Europe probably... Aah, there are many cases... Mexico, Brazil, China, Japan... something like that.

Interviewer What did your Romanian friends tell you during these few days [in Moldova], what did they tell you about Romania.

Anders I think they are very sceptical about their own country. They are very like... they didn't say a lot of good things. They said it's a corrupt country. And it was the poorest nation in the EU and so on. I mean... on the other hand I think that even though it was poor country we weren't so different after all.

Interviewer Did they explain why they thought that we weren't that different after all, or?

Anders I don't know... I think we just realised when talking to each other.

Interviewer Ok. So you went there [to Romania], and you mentioned that the language was part of it, and you thought that the language wouldn't be that difficult to learn but were there any other reasons, or?

Anders No, not really... just that I was in a part of my life where I didn't want to just do something... I had just finished my Bachelor, so I just wanted to go abroad. So it was such a short time... when I went home from Moldova, it wasn't more than just two month until I actually went to live in Romania. But usually I think you apply [for projects through the EVS programme] long time in advance. So it was just... you know riding the wave.

Interviewer Now that you say that you had only two month or so to get used to the fact that you were going to Romania and stay there for a while... did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about your specific destination, Romania?

Anders Yeah, I read about the project and all that stuff before. I don't think I received anything specifically about Romania... mainly about the organisation.

Interviewer But mainly about your project?

Anders Yeah.

Interviewer Ok. What did it say about your project, where you thought that sounds interesting?

Anders It was just... It wasn't like I was specifically bound to the projects... but then again I worked before, and I thought it was nice... I thought it was a nice thing. I think it could basically have been for any good purpose. I don't think it was the specifics that got me in [to the project].

Interviewer During your EVS project. Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed you perceptions of Romania, if possible?

Anders Yeah, sure. First of all we hitchhiked all the time, which is so different than here [in Denmark]. And there in the area where I lived it was... it wasn't just not illegal it was something that everybody did... or a lot of people did it. So it was more about that we didn't want to go with the bus because the bus only went two or three times a day... and we lived in

a small town. We didn't have any supermarket [nearby] because it was a very small town, so to go to the supermarket we had to travel 35 kilometres. Yeah, but I think one of the biggest shocks was when I saw a sign that said that you can drive with your cart or horse carriage... It was something I have never seen in Denmark. That's something that you see people riding carts in the street, and quite early you could see that they haven't had other re-buildings since the fall of the Berlin Wall... they had torn-down buildings and so on. On the other hand, I must say that before I went there [to Romania] I did have some prejudices which was about gypsies everywhere and they were trying to steal from you... but I didn't have a single experience with something like that. Yeah, I didn't have any experience with crime.

Interviewer Yeah. Did you have the chance while were working o your EVS project... did you have the chance to work together with other international EVS volunteers?

Anders Yeah, I did with three others. So, yes... that's since we had to work together of course. But I know what others [other volunteers working on other projects] they did. There were like different rules of volunteers. There was this umbrella organisation, so they would have some projects across cities and so on. So, I didn't have anything like that. So just the three people I lived and worked together with.

Interviewer Yeah. I'm just curious... because it's my impression that a lot of the EVS volunteers are girls from what I can see from my survey, and from what I've heard from the other interviewees... what about the volunteers you lived together with?

Anders Yeah, they were three girls. Let's say two women and a girl. The two of them were like 29 and 30 [years of age], so they were really just taking the last opportunity to do the EVS because you have to be 30 [years of age] or below that.

Interviewer Do you remember where they were from?

Anders There was on from France, from Poland and from Hungary.

Interviewer Did you have the chance to exchange your perceptions on each other's countries?

Anders Yeah, we did because we had some presentations about our countries and so on. Yeah, so...

Interviewer Yeah, do you remember any specifics on what you talked about?

Anders Well, what I talked about in relation to Denmark or what they thought about Denmark?

Interviewer Both.

Anders Ok. Well, I think they all had the same image that Denmark was just perfect. I think they had that image about basically all of the Nordic countries. They also had this idea in mind that we are cold people, so we don't interact with strangers and so on... yeah, but basically that we are rich and that we are friendly. So I think we had a very good image. In my presentations I... because it's such a small country [Denmark]... I couldn't realty talk about national dishes like all of the others [the other volunteers]. But people like to hear that we were the first to legalise

gay marriage... or not marriage but whatever it is called. And also it was cool to that that if we include Greenland, we are one of the biggest countries in Europe... I don't know if that makes sense, but.

Interviewer Yeah.

Anders But I think it [Denmark] would be the biggest country in Europe if you include Greenland. But that's how I presented it I guess... Yeah, and a lot of different kinds of people. There's also something that I noticed with Romania is that I saw virtually no black people. I remember that I saw at one time black people in Bucharest and I was like wow... but you didn't really see any black people... and also Chinese or other Asians. I find that in Denmark we have all kinds of ethnicities but here [in Romania] it's really rare that you see that.

Interviewer Did you also exchange your different perceptions on Romania? Did you talk about that?

Anders Yeah, we definitely did. The Polish used the expression that the Polish and the Romanians are brothers because apparently they are associated with their history and their status like... the prejudices towards them. I think also the French girl, she was also... she had the same prejudices as me about the gypsies... that you had to be really, really careful. But I'm not sure about the Hungarian. It's also maybe pretty important to mention that I lived in place where everybody spoke Hungarian, not Romanian... It's a group of Hungarians living in Romania, and they don't consider themselves as Hungarian all the way. It's complicated, haha. So the Hungarian [volunteer] was really getting in to the community because she could speak it to everyone. Not so many people there spoke English.

Interviewer Did you also have the chance to travel a bit while you were working?

Anders Yeah, I travelled basically all over Romania.

Interviewer What kind of extra value did this travel experience add to your EVS experience?

Anders It was the best experience at my stay, not that the other part [the project] was bad at all but you... when you work like that, at some point it becomes a routine and so on. It's just so amazing to go travelling... even for just a weekend. Especially because we did it almost always by hitchhiking, so we always met people on the way. So they said you have to check this out... and check this out. So... I think also our boss or organiser [at the project] he was very loose, and at the end of the day, if everything was done [all the work] it was fine [to take some time for travel]. He was very cool about it. And I mean of course Romania really had a lot of things to see, castles and nature. So that was great.

Interviewer Yeah. So after your EVS project, when you look back what effect if any do you feel that the different preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of Romania?

Anders Act I had one preparation seminar, and it was just before I went [to Romania]. I'm not sure about it... I'm not sure I can say that because it all happened very fast. I don't think that I

gained very much from that seminar to be honest, not that it wasn't good but I think I just already knew... you know I had been travelling for a long time. I think it was... it seemed very good the seminar but I think that it didn't tell me much. That's why I felt that I knew the things that they talked about.

Interviewer Do you remember what you talked about at this seminar?

Anders Not that much but I remember that we talked about what it was like to leave home and go abroad for a long period, and you know that you will have these tough periods... and yeah. We talked about cultural differences and culture shock.

Interviewer Did you also meet other international EVS volunteers at the on-arrival and mid-term seminars?

Anders In Romania?

Interviewer Yeah.

Anders Yeah, yeah. I did.

Interviewer Did you get the chance to discuss as well about your perceptions about Romania, and what were these discussions about at the seminars?

Anders The overall discussions were about... I can't remember specifically... but basically the same things as at the pre-departure [seminar in Denmark], so it was very much along the same lines. So the things I mentioned before... home sickness and up and down periods and all that stuff. The mid-term was better I think because it was a lot of reflection on... how would you evaluate your stay right now. I just remember that it was more... you actually had to think about stuff, and I thought "ok, what have <I learned".

Interviewer Yeah. Then I've got the last question here. You said in the survey that you recommended the EVS programme to others. What have you told others about the EVS programme and Romania in General?

Anders About the programme, I have really been promoting that it's such a... it's just a unique experience. It's such a good offer that I'm really amazed that none of my friends really took the message and went [abroad with the EVS]. Yeah, just the whole travelling, I got a language course. You pay a little bit but you also get money at the place. It's just so well organised. It's so nice. Yeah, it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. About Romania... I think basically what I've been telling you that I had my prejudices... I mean I did see lots of gypsies and you hear about gypsies all the time... it's like... I don't know. Basically it's like Muslims here [in Denmark], you hear about them all the time. But I think this was basically the message that I told... that it's really not like that... in that sense. It's out of proportion the prejudices that you have.

Interviewer Yeah. That was all of the questions that I had. Thanks very much for your participation.

## 8.15 Appendix 4b: Interview – Participant n. 6 (Rikke)

**Date for the conduction of the interview:** 24-11-2015

**Name of the interviewee:** Rikke

**Destination of EVS project:** La Ferté sous Jouarre, France

**Length of stay:** 11-12 month

Interviewer The first question is a bit about your experience before your EVS project. You mention in the survey that you went to visit the area where you did the project before your EVS experience. How was your experience?

Rikke Well, it was quite close to Paris on my project. So I stayed in Paris... I hadn't seen the... it was sort of in a rural area in the outskirts of Paris [the EVS project]... but I've been to Paris, so that was the reason why I wrote that, yeah.

Interviewer Could you mention a bit about for how long you stayed there.

Rikke Before?

Interviewer Yeah.

Rikke Yeah, I think I went there for vacation with my family. We were there for like ten days for Easter vacation. I wasn't that old really but I just remember that I really loved it. But the rest of my family were not the biggest fans of the city... but I was like, I really loved this city. So it wasn't because I was applying for Paris when I wanted to go, it's just like I've been to France before as well and I loved the country and also like the city... it was really gorgeous.

Interviewer What more specifically is it that you like about it?

Rikke I think... I like the sort of ambiance in the city. I think first of all it's quite nice to just walk around and there's always people in the streets. There's a nice life in the city. It has really nice specific areas. So there's different parts of the city... depending on where you go, you can have a very different experience. But I think people are nice, and they have a lot of cosy corners, and I think it shows that the French care about Paris because many of them may not want to live there but they are quite proud of the city, and they really take good care of it. I think they are proud of it anyway.

Interviewer Ok. Then about the EVS programme. What made you chose the EVS programme, rather than any other volunteer programme?

Rikke Actually it was sort of by chance because I didn't even know it... but then my grans cousin heard about something of the sort, so I just started Googling it and it came up, and... I really liked the idea that it was... well, for free and that it was paid... because I was thinking like if I do this I can always do something else afterwards if I want to... but it was like sort of an extra. And I also quite liked that you had... first of all that you would not go that far, so then I

could actually stay in contact with the place afterwards, and stay for a long time and really become a part of the life, whereas if I went to Venezuela or something and I stayed there for... even if I stayed for longer, I would have to go home and then probably not come back. So I imagined that I could get a closer relationship to my destination. And then it was... it was just more the idea of making a second home to myself than having an experience. I also spoke to someone, and I think she said it quite nicely... I think that when you haven't paid for it you feel like you owe something. You feel like you have to work because... it was more like a pure experience of volunteering. If I paid a lot of money to go somewhere, I think I would have felt like I... like the place owed me because I paid to be there, so I was supposed to have a really good time. But when you get something offered, I think you're more willing to give of yourself, and you're more willing to also enjoy when it's not easy and to take on the difficulties and struggles. Because there are struggles because it's not always easy to be away, and it's not always easy to be with other people that closely... but I felt like I'm not only here to have fun, I here to give of myself, and it was a pure experience in that way I think.

Interviewer Ok. You also mentioned that you wouldn't feel as close to the country... for instance if you travelled to Venezuela. I've got to ask you, have you been outside of Europe?

Rikke Haha, maybe it's naïve because I haven't been to... well, I've been to Morocco once. I haven't really been far away, and it is bothering me... I really want to go because I've travelled a lot in Europe but even though we have cultural differences, it's still quite similar in many ways. So, I've been to Morocco once on an exchange trip with an association, so we travelled around from city to city, We were hosted by a ministry... but I really liked that. That was a nice trip, and I really saw a lot of Morocco. But I haven't been on my own discovering any countries outside Europe.

Interviewer Ok, so this was the first time that you were on your own for a longer period of time during the EVS?

Rikke Yeah, yeah that as well. I've travelled with my sister and I have been around but I hadn't been on my own.

Interviewer Then on the information. Did you manage to collect some information about your specific EVS project before you arrived there, or information about your destination?

Rikke It was sort of a last minute thing because I applied within the EU before I went but it didn't work out that well. So actually it was... I think it was quite late that I even got the acceptance, so I didn't know that much about my project. Even before I went there I was like... I didn't really know what I'm going to be doing. I obviously knew something about the area like where am I going to be in the city, where am I going to live. And I also got to ask my organisation [receiving/hosting] obviously... ask them a few questions. But with all that

said... because my acceptance was so delayed, they already started their summer season, and basically where I went in the summer season they were working all the time. So they never had time to answer me. The information before I left was sparse, definitely... which was... I was like whatever I'm just going [there anyways]. Yeah, I knew something, since it was France, Paris, and the region... I felt like I kind of knew something about it but not much.

Interviewer Ok. Then were moving on to while you were working at your project. Could you perhaps mention any specific situations during your EVS project that changed your perceptions on your destination?

Rikke Ooh, that's a tricky one... the destination as in France, or?

Interviewer As in the local area and France in general.

Rikke I don't know. I think... obviously it's sort of a process. There may have been some conversations... because I had this feeling when I was there that people didn't really want to live in Paris. I spoke with a lot of people... maybe it was because of the sub-culture that I was involved in... It was more like a free spirit, hippie place. But a lot of people they didn't want to live in Paris. They just went there because it was absolutely where you could get a job. I noticed that they were actually quite annoyed with how centralised France is. Everything is in Paris, and also that Parisians are very Parisian. And others... Even a lot of people living in Paris who consider themselves as something else, they just think that it's [Paris] where they have to live because that's where they would be able to find a job. But people they really feel connected to other places and want to be in other places but that it's really quite centralised around Paris: So I think that was surprising to me. I think traveling around France because I did go other places. I really understand it because there are so many nice places. I think you can compare it for example... compared to Germany for example where Berlin is a big city but it's not all that centralised. Otherwise it's like... we had these French lessons which we had to because all of the volunteers do that, and one of the first lessons we translated... they had this secularity thing in France because it's a secular country and I didn't know that... It's really something that's important to them... everything about the French revolution and the consequences that it had. It's really important and still present. The number 1789 [the year of the French revolution] is really the first number you learn to recognise in French... because they actually mention that, and the fact that it's very important to them to say it out loud what happened and to also state the foundations of what they fought for... and the secularity of the state is one of these things... And I remember that we read this document which was posted in schools, which was just about how the schools were supposed to be secular, so you couldn't have religious symbols... and all of these, I think it was fifteen or twenty rules for how you should behave and be dressed in schools for small kids. I found that quite surprising because

it's not at all like that in Denmark, and I think that you would assume that our countries [Denmark and France] are quite similar. There were tons of these situations where I realised there is a big difference. It may seem quite small but it actually is quite important for the way you look at things. I think that was just one example, and I could probably mention many. I think they think of themselves and the way that you are created inside... even the small differences are actually quite big when you're n it. I was really surprised that it was a constant debate... the secularity of the state, what it means and how we define it and how we use it, how we judge.

Interviewer I think you mentioned as well that you were working together with other international volunteers. Did you discuss or exchange your perceptions about each other's countries as well, or?

Rikke Definitely. Sometimes I would even say that I learned not more about where they lived but I learned a lot about their countries as well, because they were the once I was speaking to all the time. So yeah, definitely. Especially... there was a guy who was from England so we spoke a bit, but what he said [about his home country] wouldn't surprise me as much because I knew something about England. But also met a girl from Armenia, and that was... there I learned more. When I arrived there was a group of Armenians as well on our camp. I was learning about Armenia... or Mexico. For example I have a really good friend who live in Mexico... places where I haven't been, and I don't know about these places. You think you know something but you definitely learn a lot... and I did [learn a lot] from the guys I was living with. And even like... that was just some of the countries. But otherwise it was like... we worked actively with exchange, so it was the few of us that was long-term [volunteers] but throughout the year and especially in the summer we had these work camps, so there were people from everywhere. And we... it was an active part. It was the purpose of what we were doing to promote exchange and learning from each other. So that was very great, definitely. Just to hear, sort of... ok, so how are people in South Korea and, yeah.

Interviewer Do you have, or can you remember any specific topics of what you discussed about each other's countries, or?

Rikke Yeah, I mentioned Armenia... a country that I barely knew existed. We spoke a lot about their history. It was really surprising to me to hear. There are a lot of event that's happened in the world which are really important but obviously you can't keep track of everything. It's really interesting to hear a country's history from a resident because obviously it's a bit coloured but it's also... that's why it's interesting to me. So a lot about the history but also about the current situation about how they are basically still in war... how people from Turkey and Armenia can barely speak to each other. How they... the Soviet countries are still quite close

and allied and... All of things that... I didn't even know that this country [Armenia] existed, and now you're telling me this and that. It definitely surprised me a lot. It was all of these interesting thoughts about how it [Armenia] was a very Christian country and what that means to them [the Armenians]. For example when we asked, so you're a Christian but what sort of Christian are you, because everyone else define themselves after, as a Catholic or something else... she [the Armenian volunteer] was like I'm just Christian... because for them, they're just Christians because they were like just the original Christians... and everyone else is maybe something else but... they're just Christians.

Interviewer So that was the way in which your perceptions changed, or?

Rikke Well, there weren't a lot of perceptions to change about Armenia because I had none. But yeah definitely. I think... like Mexico for example... I had no idea about that Mexico was very Catholic. So the first thing you learn is... so, ok so you're Catholic, and then hearing about their traditions. And it was also really interesting to hear about the relationship between Mexican and Americans and how that's difficult. But also how the Mexican [volunteer], she didn't want to stay in Mexico but she had this thing that... I don't want to go to America because I don't want to be just another Mexican [in America] for example. So, there are a lot of dynamics, international dynamics, which are really difficult to understand when you're from the outside. I think you can find yourself in really interesting situations. At one point I remember I was sitting and talking World War II with an Australian and a German. Most German people would have no recollection whatsoever of anything but they just live with the precautions of... to what happened. I was really surprised about the German girl. She [the German girl] was like "it's still really present in our minds what happened". And I found that... things like that, I think it's really interesting to hear because you don't think about it. I don't think about it at all because it was before I lived and even the Cold War was before I lived. It doesn't mean anything to me but to them it's still a big deal, like... Ok, so we had this and it was horrible, and they just shy away from it. And when new Nazi groups arrived it's just horrible because it's really present still in their minds what happened. All of the things like that.

Interviewer Yeah. So you already mentioned a bit that you travelled around France. Could you add something extra to that. What kind of extra value did it add for you to your EVS programme that you had the chance to travel around?

Rikke A lot, I think, because I think it would be... like to say that French people are just French is not necessarily true at all because in a lot of places there's a big difference between the nature of for instance how the country is. But I think also like I said Parisians are really Parisians, and for example if you go to Bretagne... they actually want to be a country [gain

independence] and it's a big difference. It depends where you go, how things look and there were a lot of traditions, local traditions and it does not look the same, and they don't want it to. And they actually had in the corners [of the country]... so for example if you go to the south and you can see that the language is written... it's a mixture of Spanish and French. And you can see that they have like... Spanish traditional... they have arenas obviously from the Spanish [Spanish influence] in those parts of the country, and you can go to other parts of the country and recognise things that they say are traditionally from Bretagne, and you say that it looks like Danish stuff because it looks similar. So that's interesting. But also to see that there is a lot more to France than Paris. Because a lot what we hear about France is Paris and the Mediterranean but there is so much more to France... so many more cities. And the fact that you can go there... so I went to Nantes, for example, which is a really lovely city and everyone is really crazy about this place, and I had no idea that it was such a popular place because it's a smaller city... but people really love it. So to be able to discover how there is definitely more to France but also that people for example from the south they say "oh, the Parisians are like that and like that and we're like this and like this, and we [people from the south of France] speak a little differently. And they [the French from the south] that I had a Parisian accent, and... that was good. I really felt that I mastered the language when they said that. Yeah, I think that it definitely gave more value.

Interviewer Yeah. Then in the last point. After your EVS project, when you look back on your preparation and evaluation seminars, what effect do you feel that these seminars had on your perceptions of France?

Rikke So the receiving seminars [in France] or the ones in Denmark?

Interviewer The ones in Denmark and then the mid-term evaluation as well.

Rikke Yeah. Because I was on the beginning [on-arrival seminar] and mid-term in France. I didn't actually have the after-arrival, you know the after I came back [to Denmark] thing [re-integration seminar]. I think so. I think I maybe couldn't that week. But there was this weekend before we were leaving which was... that was very general in preparation. It was just about going [abroad], and that was also with people who went further away [travelled further], so that was really a general introduction to going away on exchange... so that didn't really teach me a lot about France. But I think the... I think even the mid-term seminar in France... it was very focused on meeting other cultures. Obviously you would be introduced to something French. But it was always much about dealing with exchange, dealing with another culture and not the culture in particular [not dealing with a specific culture]. Did that make sense?

Interviewer Yeah.

Rikke So it was more practising how to be open-minded and practising how to follow a different culture... so if you see something that's different it's not because it's wrong but it's different. So, it's more in that perspective. The first one [seminar] was very introductory... like this is how it's going to be. And the second one was also about preparing to go home... maybe. So that was very much [about] working on... ok, so what's your future plans. I found that more helpful because that was very easy to get... so ok, I'm here now and just don't want to go home, and didn't want to do anything else because I just won't go home. So, it was about... so ok, what am I going to do next. So that was really good I think. I think they were really trying to sort of help you through. It was very general about exchange and culture.

Interviewer That was it for the interview. Thanks you very much for participating.

## **8.16 Appendix 4c: Interview – Participant no. 15 (Nanna)**

**Date for the conduction of the interview:** 22-11-2015

**Name of the interviewee:** Nanna

**Destination of EVS project:** Munich, Germany

**Length of stay:** 11-12 month

Interviewer So the first question I want to ask you is a bit about your previous travel experience. So I would like to know what travel experience you had before you started your EVS project. Where have you been travelling, for what purpose and for how long?

Nanna Well, I've only been travelling on holidays with my family before I went to Munich in Germany. Basically, for one week or two weeks in different countries in Europe. Do you want to know where [I was travelling]?

Interviewer Yeah.

Nanna Oh, I don't know if I remember but I went to London... I went to Hungary, Wales, Austria, Sweden and Norway... hmm, I think that's it... I went to France as well.

Interviewer Why exactly did you choose the EVS programme rather than any other volunteer programme?

Nanna It was because one of my neighbours at home where my mom lives, he's the boss of ICYE, the organisation in Denmark... so he came with a lot of ideas and that's why I went with EVS.

And I wanted to go and work in another country but I didn't have the money after high school for going outside Europe.

Interviewer So the money aspect had a lot to say as well, or?

Nanna Yeah, and because it was my first time moving away from home and so... so I didn't want to go thousands kilometres away from home.

Interviewer Why did you choose Germany because you mention [in the survey] that it wasn't exactly your first choice?

Nanna That's a funny story, or not... haha. I searched for a lot of EVS programmes but I didn't get any, and then my neighbour had this project in Germany... actually I didn't want to go to Germany because I didn't want to speak German... I hated German, and therefore I didn't want to go there. But he had a project in Germany, so I took it and I went there, and now I love German and Germany... funny how it changes.

Interviewer Did you receive any information from your sending or hosting organisation before arrival in Germany?

Nanna Yeah, I had a contact person in Munich from the [hosting/receiving] organisation there, and she sent me a lot of information. And I had the email as well on my new boss at the work in Germany, and wrote a lot of mails with them before I went there: what I needed to bring, and what I need to know about the project and the city [of Munich] and everything.

Interviewer Was there any information on places of interest like touristic places you could travel to, or?

Nanna Hmm, no... not at that time. I got the information about tourist destinations when I arrived. I didn't need to know about all of the touristic places before I went there because it was all about the project, and what I was coming to and so on.

Interviewer What about your perceptions, so now you mentioned that your perceptions about the language wasn't that good... but did you have any other perceptions about Germany before you went there?

Nanna Hmm, yeah a little bit. I don't remember it now but I know that I was a little bit negative before I went there about that it was Germany that I was going to and not Spain, or... yeah. I changed when I arrived there. I was so much different from what I was thinking... I think.

Interviewer Can you explain in what ways?

Nanna Well, I think many Danes have. Some from my school, not in high school but, you know, before you start in high school, in 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade or so... a lot from my class were very negative about the German people. And we went there as well in 7<sup>th</sup> grade I think. We went there to visit a German family, and they went to Denmark to visit us.

Interviewer An exchange.

Nanna yeah. They were very negative about the German people, and I think that's why I was a little bit negative before I went to Germany because they [classmates] were like "all Germans are ugly, all Germans are stupid", or... I don't remember what they said but, yeah... but they weren't [stupid and ugly].

Interviewer You also mentioned Spain?

Nanna Yeah, I don't know, it was just... yeah.

Interviewer Was that initially a country you wanted to travel to... your first choice, or?

Nanna No, not really, no. Actually I searched for a lot of projects, and there was one in Finland as well... and I'm very happy I didn't go there because there language is just... there language is so impossible to learn. One of my from German that I met there spoke Finnish I she tried to teach me how to count from zero to ten in Finnish, and it took me like ten days before I could. So no, I don't know. I wanted to go everywhere but not Germany... I don't know why.

Interviewer Then a bit about your project, the time during your project... Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS project that changed you perceptions about the country, Germany?

Nanna Hmm, I don't think I can mention like one experience because I think the whole year changed my perceptions. I was so lucky that I got to live in, hmm... I worked in a kindergarten, and they had a children's home as well. It was an organisation with three, four, five kindergartens in Munich and then a children's home where children lived, and in this big building they had the children's home and then a big place for hmm... what's it called... for all of the colleagues and all of the people working for this organisation. And I lived there in a room, and I was so lucky that five other German girls lived there as well... around my age... and I think they changed my perceptions of the Germans totally... yeah, and my colleagues as well.

Interviewer But there weren't any specific situations where you thought oh well I didn't actually expect this, or?

Nanna No, because there was a lot that I didn't expect during this year, and I think my perceptions of the Germans... I can't mention one experience because it was the whole year I think. It was how they took me in. My colleagues, all of them were like... because I was only 19 back then, they told me "ok I can drive you everywhere, just tell me when and where". So, they were really nice to me. They were helping me, and all of my colleagues took me to Ikea the first week, so that I could get a metres, and they showed me the whole of Munich. They were so nice to me. They were really taking care of me, as I was young.

Interviewer Did you work together with any other volunteers apart from volunteers from Germany?

Nanna No, I was the first volunteer they had, and I was the last as well. The girl who was supposed to come the year after, she didn't come [turn up]. She didn't go there. In this project I was the only one. So I go there to visit them once a year.

Interviewer So you recommended it to other people.

Nanna Yeah, I did. Well, I don't know if the project is still there because my contact person from the organisation. She [the contact person] got a new job, and the new one who had to take her [the previous contact person] job, and had to take over in the organisation didn't do a very good job, so it was like... they don't have volunteers in Munich any more... I don't think so.

Interviewer So was that the receiving organisation, or?

Nanna Yeah, it was. But they were very, very nice to me.

Interviewer So, when you recommended the EVS programme... the people you recommended the programme for, did you recommend them to go to Germany?

Nanna Do you mean the EVS programme altogether?

Interviewer Yeah.

Nanna Yeah, I told everyone to go with EVS. My brother is with... not the EVS programme but with ICYE [one of the sending organisation Dasnk ICYE's own volunteer programmes] at the moment. I told everyone to go to Munich just to travel. And I told everyone to take a year with EVS because it's one of the best years you can ever get. I was an experience to work with the local people and to experience a culture from the local side [perspective], instead of experience the country from the tourist side [perspective].

Interviewer How would you differentiate between what you experienced at your EVS programme and a normal packaged touristic holiday?

Nanna Well, I think that... I worked with the EVS programme, and I was a tourist every day in Munich... but I think when you work there you see it from another side [perspective]... I mean, I went to a German wedding for example... you wouldn't get to go to a German wedding when you are a tourist. It's more something you do as a local. I think as well... I worked in a Kindergarten with children, and the families and so on, I got to know the people in Munich. I got to know the people in Munich in another way than you do as a tourist. They are very open-minded I think.

Interviewer You said you travelled a bit as well. What kind of value did your travel experience add to your project?

Nanna Hmm, what kind of value. I don't know what's the answer to that but I think I wanted to see... as a part of seeing Munich and Germany, I wanted to see the other countries around and see a lot of cultures. I was so close to Venice, and France and Austria and so on... so I wanted to travel there, and see how the culture was there. Experience different cultures and different cities.

Interviewer Did you travel alone, or?

Nanna I travelled together with some friends. My German friends and my boyfriend, and on of my friends from Denmark who was a volunteer in Germany as well and... you know, different kind of people.

Interviewer So for your travel experience... did you manage to change your perceptions about the different destinations or places that you travelled to?

Nanna Yeah, I did.

Interviewer Can you explain in what way?

Nanna Well, I've never been to Italy, and it was funny to see the tourist destinations and the attractions and... Venice is such a beautiful town and meeting the locals, and... the Italian people are so full of life, if you know what I mean... in a different way than the Germans. They [the Italians] are very different [from the German] people, I think.

Interviewer Ok. Then the last point. After your EVS experience. When you reflect upon the different preparation and evaluation seminars, What effect if any do you feel that these different preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perception on your destination?

Nanna I don't know if they changed... how can you say it... I think the most important thing with these seminars was meeting other people from other countries: I don't think that we spoke so much about Germany because we were in Germany [during the on-arrival and mid-term seminars]. It was more about different countries and our countries, and what the differences between our countries were, and not so much about Germany. Do you understand what I mean.

Interviewer Yeah.

Nanna So I think I learned more about the other countries that the other volunteers came from than Germany on these seminars. But it changed my... what do you say... the way I see the other countries and the other cultures and so on.

Interviewer The other volunteers participating in these seminars... do you remember what part of the world they were from?

Nanna Yeah, as I still speak with some off them. I'm hopefully going to a Turkish wedding in April [2016], one of the girls is getting married... she's from Turkey... [the other volunteers are from] England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, there were three from Denmark, Poland, Spain, France. Yeah, there were a lot of countries but I don't remember... oh yeah, Ukraine.

Interviewer It's Ok if you can't remember all of them.

Nanna But actually only Europe I think... yeah, only Europe.

Interviewer If you talked about your different countries, what did they tell you about their countries?

Nanna Well, we talked about political problems... Denmark didn't have any, haha... compared to the other countries. And we [in Denmark] get paid for studying. There were a lot of them who were shocked that we get paid for studying in Denmark... all of them. We discussed religions.

Interviewer Was there at any point where you had a discussion where you disagreed on some topic, or?

Nanna I don't remember that... I don't remember. It's been a couple of years so. Probably... but I can't mention one.

Interviewer That was all the questions I had. Thank you very much for your participation.

### **8.17 Appendix 4d: Interview – Participant no. 22 (Camilla)**

**Date for the conduction of the interview:** 26-11-2015

**Name of the interviewee:** Camilla

**Destination of EVS project:** Czech Republic

**Length of stay:** 11-12 month

Interviewer The first question I have is about the time before your EVS project. So my first question is what was your travel experience before you started your EVS project?

Camilla I only travelled with my parents. I was not so old. I was only 19 when I went to [the EVS project] Czech Republic, so it was only like holidays with my family and stuff.

Interviewer Ok. Where did you go to?

Camilla On holidays?

Interviewer Yeah.

Camilla The south of Europe.

Interviewer Yeah. Do you remember what countries, ot?

Camilla Yeah, we have been to France and Italy and Croatia and Austria... Turkey, Lanzarote. So all of the warm places.

Interviewer Yeah. Then on your EVS and destination preference. What exactly made you choose the EVS programme, rather than any other volunteer programme?

Camilla I wanted to go abroad but really for a longer time like a year or ten month or something like that. But all other kinds of volunteer work was for three month. And I didn't want to go to these distant countries like somewhere in Africa or something like that. I wanted to keep it more simple but still a more different culture. With the EVS it was possible to go for a whole year.

Interviewer What was more specifically the reason why you didn't want to go to any country in Africa?

Camilla I don't know. It just seemed so...like so different. Of course I wanted one day to go to Africa and see what things are like there but for a whole year it shouldn't be a country so extremely different.

Interviewer Yeah. You also mention in the survey that the EVS destinations that you initially preferred were Spain, Italy and France. What's the reason fo this?

Camilla I had Spanish on a high level and I really wanted to learn... to speak it fluent. So I really wanted to go to Spain, and all other people also wanted to go to Spain... so it was very difficult to get a place there my sending organisation said that maybe I should open my mind a bit and try some more countries. So I said ok let's give it a chance.

Interviewer Ok. You also mentioned that Czech Republic wasn't actually your first choce... so what was the reason why you chose Czech Republic in the end?

Camilla Actually I only applied for one project in Czech Republic. I applied for so many projects in southern Europe and I wanted this southern cultural experience. And then there was this project where the work sounded really nice... it sounded like this was something I really wanted to try, so this was the only project I applied for in Czech Republic.

Interviewer Ok. You also mentioned [in the survey] that you didn't want to go to Poland and the Baltic countries. Why is that?

Camilla Yeah. I don't know why. When I imagined this year where I should do something else, and I just wanted the southern countries. To choose Czech Republic was already a bit strange for me... but it was also very positive that I went there. I got 24 hours to say yes or no... then the next in the line would get the job.

Interviewer I'm not sure you mentioned but where in Czech Republic did you stay?

Camilla I stayed in a small village very close to the border.

Interviewer Ok. Did you also manage to collect or did you receive any information about your EVS project before you arrived there?

Camilla Yeah, but I like... you get the information before you apply for it. But I applied for ten month in one village... and I got twelve month in another village. There was some communication that was not so good. If I wanted to get in touch with them [the host/receiving organisation in Czech Republic] I could just call them, they were really easy to reach but they just didn't tell me before that I was going to stay in another village than the rest. So we were like twelve people altogether, and then eight [volunteers] had to stay in one village, and four of us had to go to another village.

Interviewer When did they tell this to you?

Camilla Yeah, they said that they said that from he beginning but I just didn't know until I was there.

Interviewer Ok. Did you also receive or manage to collect any information about Czech Republic, the destination, before your arrival?

Camilla Yeah, I Googled a bit and my mom gave me a book but... yeah, I did not really know what to expect down there. I didn't know the country at all. I got so much more information after [the arrival].

Interviewer What was that information about?

Camilla Like how the whole country is put together. Like... for the Danish people most only know Prague. That's the only place they know, and this is a tourist place and it's the capital. Yeah, I was living in another part [of Czech Republic] that was more poor. And I learned how different this country is just travelling some few kilometres.

Interviewer Can you explain how it different from the different areas?

Camilla Yeah, this is Prague, and then there's a place where the middle class is living... and then there's closer to Poland, more north than I was living, where the poor people are living. And you can really easily see it when you travel around in the cities... the difference. You can just see it. But also I was living with a family and they told me a lot. In this area where I was living in was between the where the rich people lived and where the poor people living, so it was the middle class.

Interviewer So, these different social classes... was that something you were told about at the place you lived?

Camilla Yeah, from my parents in the [host]family. They told a lot of stuff. Also they had to vote... and they ask me and the girl I was living together with if we wanted to come up, and they could tell us about it and stuff. That was really interesting.

Interviewer Yeah, Then about your project, and during your EVS project. You mentioned that you did some activities with children after school. Could you explain that more in detail?

Camilla Yeah, so it was more to give them [the children] something to do after school. You could only prepare in the mornings, and then when the kids were free from school all the activities started. And that could be everything at this place... this place had everything. But I wasn't connected to all the classes. I was in the same class every week.

Interviewer Ok. Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS that changed your perceptions about Czech Republic?

Camilla I just remember when I got there and I saw the place I had to live, and I was just oh shit do I have to stay here... this area is so poor, so not Danish. I thought when I picked [chose] that country [Czech Republic] that was only 1,200 kilometres away from my home [in Denmark] it would not be that different. But then you really feel that they are an Eastern country. They are very different. But then I found out that the place where I was going to live was really,

really nice compared to all the other volunteers [the area where most of the other volunteers at the project lived in Czech Republic]. So I was lucky.

Interviewer In which ways was it nicer compared to the other areas?

Camilla It had a kitchen that was functional, haha.

Interviewer Ok. You said you also worked together with some other international volunteers, right?

Camilla Yeah.

Interviewer Did you exchange perceptions about each other's countries?

Camilla Oh yeah, we talked a lot about that. We talked a lot about "we used to do something like this, and we used to do something like this", and it was all interesting. We were twelve volunteers altogether but in my town we were four, and we were from four very different countries, so it was really interesting to talk about "what do you do for Christmas" and something like that. To learn a bit more than just about Czech Republic.

Interviewer Could you mention what countries they were from?

Camilla Yeah, the girl I was living with, she was from Latvia. Then there was a guy from Germany and a guy from Italy.

Interviewer Ok, yeah. In case you had any perceptions about these countries before, did your perceptions change when change when you talked to the other volunteers?

Camilla Yeah, maybe a bit. I don't know. I think I just learned more. But I don't know if they [the perceptions] changed...

Interviewer No, ok. Did you also have talks about your perceptions of Czech Republic?

Camilla Like... with the other volunteer?

Interviewer Yeah.

Camilla We saw the country a bit different I think. Me and the German guy were of course close to each other, like... we often saw the same things. The girl from Latvia, she had more in common with Czech Republic itself. So there were a lot of things that they [the Czechs] were doing and how they did it, they were also doing this in her [the Latvian girl's] country... and she almost spoke the language before [arriving in Czech Republic] because, I don't know. She [the Latvian girl] could speak Russian. And the Czechs they kind of speak Russian... It's called Czech but it's in family with Russian.

Interviewer Did you also manage to travel a bit when you were not working?

Camilla Yeah. We travelled a lot. I wanted to see every little corner of this country. I didn't see so much in the beginning... I thought of going home [to Denmark]. But then suddenly there was another project in the city, or the town, where they started in January, and then suddenly everything was more fun and we started to travel... and we wanted to see everything. And

then suddenly we were four more volunteers, so we were eight in this small town... And then we started to see everything.

Interviewer Yeah. I just need to hear if I understand it correctly... Did you change to another EVS project, or?

Camilla No.

Interviewer That was just another project within your EVS project, or?

Camilla Yeah, I was working on this school, and then there came a project on a language school. It was just the same town, so we [the EVS volunteers] got to know each other really fast.

Interviewer After your EVS project, when you look back on your preparation and evaluation seminars... what effect if any do you feel that these seminars had on the perceptions that you created about Czech Republic?

Camilla Like the camps with the sending organisation?

Interviewer Yeah, and during your stay in Czech Republic.

Camilla I think it was good. Especially, I was on two [seminars] in Czech Republic... they were really good. I don't know about the other EVS countries but in Czech Republic they collected all EVS volunteers in the whole of Czech Republic. So I think we were three or four groups. So, those I didn't get to know... but all from my project got to know them. So, in the end we all got to know all of the volunteers. That was really nice. And then you could go to some places and there was always some place we could visit... a place or something like that. I think that was a really good way to do it.

Interviewer I forgot to ask actually... you said before that you considered going back home [to Denmark] at some point. What was the reason for this?

Camilla I think that it was just nothing like I expected. I expected when we were so many young people we would just have fun... we would just see things, and yeah... feel the country. And then the girl I was living with got together with one of the guys. And then everything was just so boring. Nobody wanted to travel with me or anything. But then came four more volunteers and we started talking.

Interviewer Yeah, where did they [the new volunteers] come from?

Camilla On from Scotland, one from Ireland, and one from France and then one from Austria. And now the Austrian is together with me, haha!

Interviewer Ok, haha! There's something that I have to ask because when I've talked to the other interviewees it seems like quite a lot of the EVS volunteers are girls... Was that the case at your project as well?

Camilla No, we were half-half. Yeah.

- Interviewer Ok. While you were travelling... what kind of value do you feel that this travel added to your EVS experience?
- Camilla It just felt so good to see the country you were visiting. I felt like I would have wasted my time if I didn't see the country living in for one year. All places are interesting.
- Interviewer I think you also mentioned [in the survey] that you recommended the EVS programme to others. When you recommended it... or if you were supposed to recommend it now. What would you tell other about EVS and your experience?
- Camilla I would... yeah, I don't know... the fact that they give you a place to live and work, and you stay there for so long that you can get to know the place. You feel it like a second home. It's not just some place. And then there's also people from other countries... it's also nice. If you travel with other programmes for something... it's only Danish people. And also when you go there, you don't pay that much... so it's really cheap.
- Interviewer If you had to tell other about experience in Czech Republic... or about Czech Republic as a country, what would you tell them? What was your experience of the country?
- Camilla I think that many people don't want to visit this country because it's just a country in the middle [in between the north and the south]... Who wants to go there? But there is so much to see. Even though it's a poor country, they still have very beautiful places and beautiful nature. People should visit it more. I didn't know either how it was because I never went there.
- Interviewer Yeah. That was all of the questions I had for you, so thank you very much for your participation.

## **8.18 Appendix 4e: Interview – Participant no. 27 (Gitte)**

**Date for the conduction of the interview:** 25-11-2015

**Name of the interviewee:** Gitte

**Destination of EVS project:** Beaulieu, England

**Length of stay:** 11-12 month

- Interviewer First of all I'm interested in your travel experience before you EVS experience. What was your travel experience before you started your EVS project, and where to did you travel, for how long and with hat purpose?

Gitte Yeah. So before my EVS I had only been on holidays for a short period of time to places in Europe mainly and together with my parents. I've been on holiday to Mexico with my aunt and I've been to France. It was mainly just for a short time.

Interviewer Yeah, ok. Then a bit about your destination preference and your preference for the EVS programme. What exactly made you choose the EVS programme, rather than any other volunteer programme?

Gitte I think it for a low cost gap year... it was for free. And also I liked the EVS programme because it seem like it was very organised, and I just liked the concept. It seemed like there was a lot of options about what to do. I went to this vacation conference in Aalborg, and we were told about what we could do in a gap year, and she highly recommended the EVS. Firstly, I thought that all the application process was a bit complex but I just went for it, and it seemed very interesting.

Interviewer You also mentioned in the survey that you didn't prefer destinations like Germany and Eastern Europe. What is that?

Gitte Well, I really wanted to go abroad but I didn't want to go to those countries because I just wanted to go to a country where I could speak English as the main language. I really just wanted to improve my English. So I guess that was the main reason why I wanted to go to the UK and not some other countries.

Interviewer Ok, yeah. You also mentioned [in the survey] that initially you preferred London. Why exactly London?

Gitte I guess I was something like everyone else wanting to go there. Yeah, England is... I just associated England with London. And there would be so many things to explore and it was a country [England] that I was used to, so I thought it would be very exciting to live in the capital and experience that.

Interviewer Then a bit about the information that you received or collected before your project. Did you manage to collect any information or did you receive any information about your destination before your arrival?

Gitte Well, I looked at the projects website and I talked with my host organisation and the director at the organisation that I worked at... or volunteered at. Yeah, I did get some information, and looked at maps and stuff like that. Yeah, I knew a little bit about it but... Of course I wouldn't know that much if I didn't do that [research] before but... yeah.

Interviewer Do you remember what kind of information you were given, or?

Gitte I first talked with Neil from my host organisation. I think he told me about how it was to be a volunteer there, what the previous volunteers had experienced, what the place was like... and

the village [village nearby Southampton]. And he told me about... yeah, he gave me some information about the New Forrest [nearby Southampton].

Interviewer Yeah, and that was the area that you worked in?

Gitte Yeah, that was the area I worked in.

Interviewer Yeah, so who did you live when you arrived at your project?

Gitte I lived with two girls, two English girls who also worked at the project. And they just graduated from university. They became my friends and we're still friends today. So that was very nice.

Interviewer Ok. So, were they volunteers like you, or?

Gitte Yeah, you could say that. They did it to get something on their CV. But it was a bit difficult [for them] to live there.

Interviewer Were they part of the EVS programme as well?

Gitte No, that was another experience. It was just to get something on their CV. So they were volunteers and got this very small amount of money [pocket and food money] like me, and they also lived there for free.

Interviewer Yeah. Then during your EVS project. Could you mention any specific situations during your project that made you change your perceptions about destination, if possible?

Gitte Hmm, I don't know.

Interviewer Any interactions you had with those two English volunteers, or any other?

Gitte Well, before I went I was very nervous about how it would be to live in a very small village, would it be too challenging to live there because I lived in a national park, so there's not that much public transport. All things like that. But everyone were nice and offered me to drive me around and give me a lift to the train station. But also loved the time living in the national park. During the time I was living there, I realised that there are houses in the area. And I did lots of stuff with the girls I lived with, like partying, cycling and even did kayaking: I don't know if that was the answer you wanted to get.

Interviewer Yeah, well part of it. Also generally your perceptions on the people living in the area.

Gitte I don't know if I changed my mind-set about it but I assumed that it would be nice people in the whole area where I worked. And I experienced that they were nice people, and I saw some very nice places... and, yeah.

Interviewer Yeah. Just to be sure, the New Forrest where you worked, could you just mention something about the area... where was it situated?

Gitte It's in the south of England, very close to Southampton. There's a national park there. I lived in a village called Beaulieu... very small village but very unique.

Interviewer Did you work together with other international EVS volunteers?

Gitte No, I was the only one. But there was a lot of other people my age, so we had a lot of fun and did stuff together.

Interviewer I know that through the EVS you have some mid-term and on-arrival seminars. Did you meet other international EVS volunteers there?

Gitte Yeah, I met a lot... also a few from Denmark. There was two of these camps, and it was also nice to share our experience with each other.

Interviewer Do you remember what you talked about? What were the other international volunteer's perceptions on England?

Gitte Like me, I think that a lot of them wanted to go to London. But hmm, the perceptions... let me think...

Interviewer It's ok if you can't remember it.

Gitte No, I can't remember it.

Interviewer It's ok. Did you get the chance to travel around while you were living in England?

Gitte Yeah, I got the chance to travel around.

Interviewer Where did you go to?

Gitte Well, I went to places like... well, I went to London and then I went to the Lake District, and I went to Leeds on my on-arrival camp and Nottingham on mid-term camp, and Salisbury, Bournemouth, and I went to Cornwall and Portsmouth... and what else...

Interviewer It's ok if you can't remember all of the places. Just some of them. What value if any do you feel that this travel experience gave you in addition to your EVS programme?

Gitte Well, I was just very keen to go to places during the weekends. It just didn't want to just be in the village and be there all the time. I just wanted to explore and see other places in England. I mean the first place I went to was London but as I went to other places I realised that England is so much more than London. I really enjoyed to go to different places, and just wanted to explore.

Interviewer You say that England is so much more than London... in what ways?

Gitte Before I went England, I didn't know how beautiful the nature is in England and then I went to places like the Lake District... I guess I just thought that England was a bit like London but it's not at all the case. There are lots of cool places. What was the question again?

Interviewer I just asked what kind of extra value it added to your EVS experience that you had the chance to travel around.

Gitte Well, I think I would have time to travel around anyway... like a gap year. But I was just very happy that I was able to travel around to explore the place.

- Interviewer Yeah. So, after your EVS project... when you look back, what effect if any do you feel that the different EVS preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions on your EVS destination?
- Gitte Could you please repeat that.
- Interviewer Yeah, sure... Or maybe I can rephrase it, or say it in another way. In which ways do you feel that the EVS evaluation and preparation seminars... what effect do you feel that these seminars had on your perceptions of your EVS destination?
- Gitte I think I was given... in the preparation camp they told me to be open-minded and also explore the area that we lived in... and difficulties like transport problems, and just trying to work it out ourselves. I don't know... as I said before I did change my view on the place I lived. In the beginning I think I saw all of the difficulties there. The things I also mourned about was like, it was a pain to get to the train station. But in the end I saw more options and all the good things about the place I lived in. I don't think it was the place itself that made me a bit negative in the beginning, I just think it was because it was a bit difficult to go abroad, and that's why I was also a bit negative in the beginning but I ended up really loving the area... I still do, so.
- Interviewer Actually I forgot to ask, did you discuss with the other international volunteers that you met at the seminars... did you discuss something about each other's countries, like your perceptions about your home countries?
- Gitte Well, I don't know if we discussed it. We probably all had some views about... We did have some views about each other's home countries. Yeah, I don't know.
- Interviewer But you didn't discuss it in details, or?
- Gitte No, I don't think so.
- Interviewer No, ok. I think you mentioned as well... and this is the last question... I think you mentioned as well that you recommended the EVS programme to others. When you recommended it [the EVS programme], what have you told the people that you recommended the programme to?
- Gitte I told that it's a great opportunity to have a gap year, and it's a good way of travelling, and you are located in one place for a long term so you get to live there... It becomes your home. So backpacking is also cool but you don't really get to know the place as well as if you live there for a long term. And the EVS is well-organised, and I didn't experience any problems with the project and I feel like it's a safe way to live in another country. You meet a lot of people on the mid-term and on-arrival camp.
- Interviewer Yeah, ok. That was it for the interview. Thanks a lot for participating.

## 8.19 Appendix 4f: Interview – Participant no. 31 (Cecilie)

**Date for the conduction of the interview:** 25-11-2015

**Name of the interviewee:** Cecilie

**Destination of EVS project:** Zagreb, Croatia

**Length of stay:** Less than 2 month

Interviewer So the first question is about what you did before your EVS project. You mentioned in the survey that you participated in a project through ICYE [the Danish sending organisation Dansk ICYE] before your EVS. Could you explain a little bit more about this project.

Cecilie Yes, I was in my first gap year, and then I decided that I wanted to go to Asia, and I found ICYE. And I was there for two month in the Philippines... short term, on a programme called STEPS [one of Dansk ICYE's own volunteer programmes], where you are a volunteer at a host organisation. I was there [in the Philippines] at a school teaching English and physical education and stuff like that. An I liked the whole travel with a purpose, so when I got home I was home for two month or something like that, and I just ask ICYE if that had suggestions for more short term projects or something like that. And then they [Dansk ICYE] had a project in Zagreb in Croatia which they suggested, so I just applied and I got it.

Interviewer Did you have any other travel experience except for that project through ICYE?

Cecilie Not like volunteering but in general I travelled a lot with my family. And I went together with a gymnastics team to Brazil a couple of years ago. So I travelled a lot with my family I think. That's one of the reasons I wanted to go.

Interviewer Yeah. Then on your EVS destination preference. Why did you choose a project that lasted less than two month?

Cecilie I think it was just a good fit at that time that it wasn't for a longer period. Normally the EVS is quite long... half a year or something like that... and then they had this project and it was only one month or so.

Interviewer Ok. Did you have a look at some of the long-term projects as well?

Cecilie No, because I had plan for my second gap year, so it had to be less than three month.

Interviewer Ok. Why did you choose Croatia as your specific destination?

Cecilie I didn't really choose the country, I just chose the project and it was in Croatia. So it just was a natural thing.

Interviewer So that was... like you said before... that was an option that they showed you from the ICYE office?

- Cecilie Yeah, they suggested some different projects and this one [in Croatia] sounded the nicest. And then Croatia was just where it was so... I think I would have taken it if it was in other places as well.
- Interviewer Yeah. What other projects did they [the ICYE office in Denmark] show to you?
- Cecilie There was something about working near the Camino [in Spain] where people walk, and I could... I think it something in a communications office or something like that. But I think that was three or four months, so that was too long. And they [the ICYE office in Denmark] suggested something different, I can't remember what, but this one [the project in Croatia] sounded the nicest.
- Interviewer Did you manage to collect or did you receive any information before your arrival at your destination... information about the project and the destination?
- Cecilie Yeah, we were at the introduction weekend or camp with ICYE where we got general information, and then they sent us a lot of... our host organisation sent us a lot of flyers, pamphlets and stuff about this is the place where we're going to be in, and our [host] organisation and information about Zagreb, so there was a lot of information.
- Interviewer While you were working on your project... you mention that you were working with communication and practical help at a street festival. Could you explain a bit more about this.
- Cecilie Yeah, it was... the organisation we were at in Croatia focused on a project including subjects like self-development and a lot of personal processing and stuff, and they were a part of this street festival C'est is D'Best, which has been there for like twenty years or something, and it's in June and lasts for a week... and there's street artists from around the world, all types of artists like musicians and clowns and performers and all that stuff. And all the tasks involved was... before the festival we promoted it [the festival] to local people, and we had workshops with both younger kids and old people, where we just talked about the festival and did something related to the street performance stuff. And we also talked with the local newspapers and radios... and just talked about the festival and got to spread the word. And then just helped out in the office before [the festival], and then during the festival we were just like practical helpers at the information both or helped planning special events and helping the artists if they needed some people.
- Interviewer Then a bit on your interactions with the locals. Could you mention any specific situations during your EVS project that changed your perception about your destination... if possible?
- Cecilie I think... I've been to Croatia a couple of times but always at the coast, where people are very interested in the tourists because it's the main industry. In Zagreb it's more local I think. I cannot say that it was a big city like Copenhagen for example with a very international crowd but it's really Croatian... People don't know how to speak English very well and it's really

smaller than Aarhus [2<sup>nd</sup> largest city in Denmark] size wise. So it's really like... at the university for example people really know each other, and that's really nice. So it was really like a village kind of feel, even though it is the capital and it's a big city. And they're very friendly but there's also like a language barrier that makes them [the Croatians] kind of private because they don't want to speak English with you, so. Sometimes it's kind of hard but really nice people anyway.

Interviewer How did you feel about this... that they didn't always want to speak English with you?

Cecilie Well, we got taught some basic terms at work, so that we could try to do body language and talk to them. We just had to improvise a bit, so it was ok when you got used to it.

Interviewer You also mention... now that we are talking about Zagreb... you were surprised that it was more modern. Could you explain a bit more about this?

Cecilie Yeah, I guess I just thought that when you of a capital of a European country you think of Copenhagen, Berlin, London... some bigger cities. Even though Copenhagen is not that big, you still get a big city feel when you are there, and in Zagreb it was really just like walking through Aarhus or something like that. It didn't have that big city feel, and very like... also they didn't speak English that well, and it also felt like a small town, and they didn't have a lot of new buildings and stuff, so it had this village kind of feel, and I didn't really expect that.

Interviewer Ok. It sounds like you worked with a lot of other international EVS volunteers. Did you have the chance to talk to them about your different perceptions on each other's countries?

Cecilie Yeah, we did that a lot because we were from ten different countries, so it was really clear how it differed... especially because we were some countries from the north like Denmark, Latvia and Poland, and then there was a lot of southern countries from Spain and Portugal and Italy. Then there was a country like Romania... so, yeah, we talked about it a lot.

Interviewer Do you remember what you talked about?

Cecilie I think that one of the things that was really clear was the way we communicated. The Italians, the Spanish and the Portuguese people they could all talk together even though they don't speak the same language, and when you saw a conversation between them you could also tell that they used a lot of body language and their whole mimic you could say. And then people from Denmark and Latvia we were more like... maybe not as much as out there... and we [the Danish and the Latvians] were more... I don't know how to say it... we thought more about it and then we put it out. And then there were the everyday thought that in the morning they [the Spanish, Italians and Portuguese] were half asleep and we [Danish and Latvians] were not, so we [Danish and Latvians] were more considerate maybe of everything... and then we [Danish and Latvians] could also just eat everything.

- Interviewer How did you feel about this situation... that you worked together with people from so many different countries... what did that mean to you?
- Cecilie I think it was nice... also because the project really needed all of the different people... because some of us had joined the project because it was that big. Some joined because of the vacation part, and some joined because they were street artists themselves and musicians, so it was a really nice place that you had all of the different people for this one festival that was really focused on diversity and stuff like that. So I think it played a big role that we were very different.
- Interviewer Yeah. Did you also manage to travel a bit around the country or outside while you were working?
- Cecilie I was on tours... like on road trips together with some Romanians but that was just inside of Croatia. I know that some people went to Barcelona and stuff like that. I don't know... I think we just went where I had been before, so we just went down the coastline [of Croatia].
- Interviewer What value do you think that this travel experience gave you, as an extra experience to your EVS?
- Cecilie What... can you repeat that?
- Interviewer Yeah, sure. What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS project?
- Cecilie Hmm... I don't really know...
- Interviewer What did you gain from your travel experience... like an extra experience next to your project?
- Cecilie Ah, ok. I think it's always nice to go travel especially when you're there in the country for a month. You can always see the city. You can always see the more of the country when you're on holiday. So yeah, I think it was nice to just take some time off and then not really work on the project. You're still in it [around the project] when you're in the city, so then you go away and you could really take time off.
- Interviewer Yeah. Then after your project. When you look back at your project and your time in Croatia, what effect if any do you feel that the different preparation and evaluation seminars had on your perceptions of your EVS destination?
- Cecilie Hmm well, I guess it was really nice with the preparation... the EVS preparation... because they really try to... even though I sometimes think that it's [the project and life in Croatia] really bad... it will get better. And it's also really a security that you have someone if something goes wrong. You have someone to supervise you. I think the preparation courses will help people getting sorted out if you're not really prepared to go. But it's good to know that when the project is not really that good, there are also other things to do around the

country, so then you don't really feel that discomfort. So when you go abroad you should just be paying more attention to the details and enjoy it.

Interviewer Yeah, Did you actually manage to participate in an on-arrival seminar?

Cecilie Well, not like... while we were there all those who came to the project should be there at the same time, so all of us should be at the same host organisation. So we of course had some intro weeks and team building exercises and something like that.

Interviewer What more specifically did you do during those [intro] days?

Cecilie When we got to the new country abroad?

Interviewer Yeah.

Cecilie Well, we had... we did a road show with different decoration suits. So we tried to make something for the old volunteers and also something as a group. So at our first weeks we had something together with the people who worked at our organisation... So we made a treasure hunt through Zagreb, where we got to know the city and got to know each other. We had something that would be on the more personal level, and we also talked about our expectations and what we could contribute to the project.

Interviewer What value if any do you feel that this introduction had for you?

Cecilie I think it was very nice because if you have to work with people, it's also important that... and it's really intensive for a month... it's really important to get to know them better so that you can talk to them and to the people there [at the project], if there are problems then you can solve them in some way. So, I think that was really important.

Interviewer You mention [in the survey] that you recommended the [EVS] programme. What would you tell other people about Croatia and your project, if you had to tell them something about it?

Cecilie About the project... It's really nice that you can get friends from all over Europe. I have met with some of the people after our project was done... and that's really nice. And you get really... I think even though there are bad cases, we were treated mostly nice. You feel like a local because you know the whole city when you have been there for a couple of weeks. I can recommend it, definitely. Also the organisation treated us really as well, so I would recommend it.

Interviewer Ok. That was all of the questions I had. Thank you very much for your participation.

## 8.20 Appendix 4g: Interview – Participant no. 33 (Frederikke)

**Date for the conduction of the interview:** 25-11-2015

**Name of the interviewee:** Frederikke

**Destination of EVS project:** Montendre, France

**Length of stay:** 11-12 month

Interviewer First about your travel experience before your EVS experience. So, I'm interested in knowing, what was your travel experience before you started your EVS project? Where did you travel to and for how long, and with what purpose?

Frederikke I had travelled a bit with my parents for vacation and stuff in Spain, England, France a bit as well, Norway and Sweden... so around in Europe a bit. And then I've also been on a language course for three weeks in France during high school.

Interviewer Ok. Then about your EVS destination and your preference for the EVS programme. What made you choose the EVS programme, rather than any other volunteer programme?

Frederikke I think that I searched for the possibilities to go out. I wanted to travel or to experience another culture and to live there for a while, and then I just saw the different opportunities. I didn't mind that it would be in Europe for example, and then the EVS programme it presented the opportunity where I didn't have to earn a lot of money beforehand, I could just go right after high school. I didn't want to waste time by earning money or anything. I just wanted to go. And then I think I didn't have a specific idea of what field I wanted to go into. The motive was just to experience another culture. There was a specific wish of what I wanted to do. I knew that some things would be more interesting to do than others but I didn't really want to work with animals or stuff like that.

Interviewer You mentioned [in the survey] that initially you preferred France as your first choice. What was the reason for this?

Frederikke I had already had... in high school I had three year of French studies, and I had also been in France for those three weeks at a French course to learn the language better, so I knew that... or I had an idea that I wanted to learn another language than English really well. I didn't want a year to be wasted. I felt like if I could go to France, it would be easier to stay there because I knew a bit about France, and also was really focused on learning a language really well. Then I also thought when I was going that if I had to learn another language like for example Romanian or, I don't know... Estonian or something like that, then it would take a while to learn it, and it would be easier just to start with a language that I already knew a bit about. And also I had visited France before and I liked the French culture. I guess it was also a bit familiar. It wasn't a totally strange country.

- Interviewer Ok. You also mentioned [in the survey] that initially you didn't prefer to have your project in Eastern European countries. Can you explain why?
- Frederikke I think... I had never really travelled in Eastern European countries, and I didn't really have any interest in the culture at that point. I simply didn't find it interesting. I think that I never really heard anything about it. There was a lot of different countries that I didn't really know anything about... so that was the reason. It was just something that I never really thought about, and it wasn't something that I really thought that now I'm going to study... It was more the well-known countries that I was interested in.
- Interviewer During your project it didn't really matter in the end where the project was situated and that you've been to Eastern Europe afterwards. What made you change your mind in this way?
- Frederikke I think it was because of my project because I lived with a lot of other international volunteers, and some of them were from the Eastern European countries, and so my experience... the EVS experience itself... like that you're out of your own culture and that you meet new people... the internationals and the locals... that experience would have been the same in any other culture or country. It wasn't specific. It didn't matter that I was eating French food or something like that... that was not the experience that was the important one. And then I think, the meeting with all the other international volunteers had really broadened my view on where it would be interesting to travel and which countries that would be interesting to travel around. And especially the most [previously] Soviet countries and stuff like that... that were here [at the project in France] apart from [volunteers from] all the other countries [represented at the project] that I was living with... and I thought it was very interesting because I had never really heard a lot about it, and therefore it was... I never thought of it. When I was living with them [the EVS volunteers from the Eastern European countries], it was very different the way of life that they lived before and how life was now. Then later [after the EVS experience] I travelled and I saw a different practice in the Eastern Europe, and... I don't know... I was just really interested, and it's definitely because I met those people [the EVS volunteers from the Eastern European countries] at that point.
- Interviewer Then about the information collected before your arrival. Did you manage to collect any information about your destination, or did you receive any information about your specific destination?
- Frederikke I think... I was in contact with one of... a great person who was in charge of the EVS volunteers, and then they had a website... the project and the place where I lived [in France]... and I remember that I was checking out some YouTube videos as well about the place. And I also had a description of the project and stuff. I also remember that I didn't want to know too much because it shouldn't be some expectations I had made up, or something... I

didn't want to have too high expectations. I really wanted to go there and experience it without any judgements.

Interviewer Yeah. During your EVS project... you say that you didn't want to create any prejudgements before you took off to France. But could you mention any specific situations perhaps during your EVS that changed your perceptions about your specific project destination, France and the local area?

Frederikke The culture or like the place?

Interviewer Both culture and place.

Frederikke Yeah. I don't have any specifics. There are always things that cannot really... like the cultural experience of going to another place. I remember how it was strange that people were kissing each other when they met. I didn't find it very comfortable to kiss strangers and stuff like that. I also thought it was strange that they were eating their biggest meal for lunch and not for the dinner and stuff like that. I don't know... I think during the year there was more and more stuff that you were learning about that was actually different. But it's difficult to mention them like that. There was lots of stuff, and it was also really interesting to live different... to live with other people coming from other cultures, and coming to the French culture... and to see what kind of stuff that we [EVS volunteers] thought was strange all of us and what kind of stuff... that maybe for a person like me from Denmark, I thought that was a bit strange and other people they would think that it was quite normal.

Interviewer Could you mention if... or can you remember any situations where you experienced this?

Frederikke I'm really bad at the specifics

Interviewer It's ok if you can't remember it.

Frederikke no, not really.

Interviewer That's ok. You also mentioned that the main theme of your project was inclusion. Could you explain how that got expressed in your project?

Frederikke For instance I know that when they chose the volunteers to work there, they had a philosophy that they wouldn't actually... if they could, they would take all [volunteers] in. In our EVS project, they looked at what can this volunteer do for our project, and then they picked the one that fitted the best. But I know at our project and in my organisation they were very large because wanted everyone. It didn't matter really if they didn't know what they were saying yes to completely because they wanted a diverse group of volunteers a possible from different countries and different sex and genders. So in our group of volunteers, we were very different, and we were living together, so that was one part of it. And then we had local youngsters. We were living in a rural area that we also had the youngsters from the suburbs for example coming to live together with us to crate some kind of inclusion project, and to get them into

some kind of other lifestyle maybe for a week or two weeks. And we also worked with people who didn't have a job. For instance we had building projects, and we would be maybe two or three volunteers from my organisation, and then there would be maybe five of these people [youngsters and jobless] that would do some work. And then together with the municipality, they [the youngsters and the jobless] would work on some project were there was a person in charge... to be in charge and do all this work. Actually it became... that group of people became some of our local friends. So that was quite interesting how this group, they had never had any education, and they had maybe always lived in this little town in this rural place, and then they met these people from all over the world. They met people from Asian, they met people from America and a lot of places in Europe, and I think that it created a really good dynamic also outside of our project.

Interviewer Yeah. Could you explain where in France your project was situated, because you say that you travelled to Paris sometimes to do your work.

Frederikke Hmm, no we didn't go to Paris, it was those from Paris who came to us from the suburbs mainly. They came to experience a non-urban type of lifestyle with a garden and stuff like that. But it was like 45 minutes from Bordeaux in the south-western part of France.

Interviewer Yeah. Ok. So you worked together with a lot of other international EVS volunteers as well I can understand. Did you have the chance to exchange perceptions about each other's countries as well?

Frederikke Yes, I think that was one of the things that really made it interesting. Also it wasn't just EVS, it was also French volunteers, they had a programme in France. And also there were some outside of any really EVS system... it was just a mix of people. And I think we changed each other a lot just being different people but also being from different cultures. I think, I had a friend there... he was from Ukraine, and it was just during the year when the Ukrainian conflict started, and he was actually more on the pro-Russian side because he was in a Russian family when he was living there. He was also from the part [of Ukraine] where there is still war. And I remember that if I hadn't been living with friend at this point in time, I would have been very... I don't think I would have been able to see [understand] the pro-Russian side of the conflict. I would only have been able to see [understand] the more Ukrainian or pro-European side... but just by living with this guy, I maybe did not agree d with him about everything that happened there but I could see the other side to it as well. I think that opened my eyes to a lot of things about how we see very narrow-minded without even seeing that we do this. We can sometimes be very culturally narrow-minded without realising. And just all other things like that with all the other volunteers.

Interviewer Yeah. What were their [the international EVS volunteers] perceptions on France? Did you discuss this as well?

Frederikke Yes. I think that... some of my friends from the Eastern European countries, they had this idea that France was this great nation, and then when they came [arrived] they were actually kind of disappointed because we were living in rural areas, and we were living in an old house, and they [the other international volunteers] thought that our Internet was so slow. They said that in their nations they had it [the Internet connection] so much quicker. So there were little things like that, and also I remember we also had a discussion about the perception of beauty because my French friends and when we were working, they wanted it to look good and the view of it, where I was like it has to be functional and practical. So that was also the kind of view that I thought was very French after we had spoken. Also when you sat at the table, there was some people they were very... because we were sitting and eating lunch every day at the same time with the staff and the volunteer and the local people that were somehow connected to the project, and they were sitting more than an hour talking and eating, and they couldn't understand why we had to say [mention] that. And then the French were like, you have to stay after you've finished eating. You have to talk and enjoy your meal. There was a lot of things like that I think, because the French they didn't think that they were very slow. Sometimes I think it was very difficult for them to take the pace. But I think the good thing is that they do it that way then let them do it that way, and then we kind of found a middle way, where people would be like "ok, after this amount of time, it's ok". And also with the... people from some of the Asian countries, they were also... when they came they had never been drinking [alcohol] before, or they had never partied as we did there [in France], and it wasn't maybe the French way but the French were much more open than they [the Asian volunteers] were used to. They [the Asian volunteers] always said when they left that now France had ruined them because they wouldn't be able to go back to the lifestyle they had before.

Interviewer Ok. Did you also have some time to travel while you were working on your EVS project?

Frederikke Yes, Actually my organisation had different places... they worked together with big organisations with different sub-organisations, so they had some meetings where we would be going. Sometimes we were to a place near Paris to meet up for a week to share the experience and also I went to see Paris, even though I had been there before. When we had weekend, we could go a bit before so we could see some stuff. And also we would be going to the Pyrenees to do skiing. That was something that we arranged between... I think... there were a lot of us volunteers who wanted to go skiing in the Pyrenees, and then there was one of the staff members, he knew someone with pay-as-you-go tickets, so it was like we [the international volunteers] and the staff were going to, so it was like a good free-time... a way of spending

time with each other. And I also went to the Alps because they also had an organisation there... they had a big meeting, not for the volunteers but for all the organisation members. Then they [the staff members] were like if we wanted to join we could go. So we were two, me and my friend we were going there.

Interviewer Yeah. What kind of extra value do you feel that this travel experience added to your EVS project?

Frederikke I definitely felt that sometimes it could be a bit too much with the work and all the people there And it was kind of tedious work. It wasn't that interesting always and it was very cold and stuff in the winter, so it was very nice to have something to look forward to. And also now that I was in France I really wanted to see some of it [the country] as well. So, I think it did really... I think it was important that you have the daily life, and then you have something to look forward to, and that you also felt like you spend your time in France with a purpose. For example it wasn't just going far away. It was just for the weekend that we said ok so we haven't seen this part of the region, let's go there... so we felt that we were in France, and not just in this bubble of volunteer life. We also wanted to see some stuff outside. Yeah, I think it was very important because otherwise it would have been a bit dull. The daily life was more interesting, when you had something to look forward to in the vacations when they begin.

Interviewer So, after your EVS project... after you returned... when you look back on the different preparation and evaluation seminars, do you feel that these seminars had an effect on your perceptions on your EVS destination, or?

Frederikke I felt like that... when I was coming home, I... there was some kind of loss of not being there [at the project in France] anymore, also because I didn't have something to start with right away. So when I went to the seminar [the re-integration/post-experience seminar], it was very nice to meet people that had had the same experience, and maybe they felt the same loss. Almost everyone felt the same kind of loss at that point. Just being able to speak about it was nice. I also felt like maybe it seemed better than it actually was. Afterwards, it was kind of, you remember all of the good stuff but there were also all of the fun things about work and stuff... but in the aftertime it became more like...really good. But it also depended, because I know people who have been on similar projects like me, they didn't have the same positive experience as I did, so I also thought that it was really, really personal how to see the project and to accept it on its own premises. It seemed like... for some it just didn't fit. They couldn't agree, or they came away with a bad experience. For me I really felt... right after it was finished I felt the summer had been so hard. It had been a lot of work, and I really looked forward to go back to Denmark. But as soon as I was home I was like I really had a fantastic experience, and I was really going to miss it a lot.

Interviewer Do you remember what they told you, those volunteers who weren't totally satisfied with their projects?

Frederikke I... like we [in France] had a guy that had to leave our project because he couldn't agree with the terms. He couldn't figure out to live in the lifestyle... in the way that we were living a lot of people together. We didn't have a lot of privacy for example... stuff like that. And then another one... I think people they got a bit angry at the organisation [in France], like how the organisation was structured, how they changed things if it didn't work, and how... sometimes our organisation... there wasn't a lot of money, and there wasn't a lot of people to do the work, so they [the staff] were always busy and stuff. They [the volunteers] just felt that it [the project] wasn't well-organised and these things, and if you couldn't accept then and move on, it would just be more and more and more [frustration], and it would be a bad project. So it [the frustration] would build up. And I think... if I had wanted to, or if the people I had been working with... if hadn't connected with these people, it could have been too much for me too. But because there was something that worked for me, it became really good. For others, because they couldn't... the bad was just more than they... the troubles were just more than they thought they would be getting.

Interviewer Yeah And I think you also mentioned that you recommended the EVS programme to others. What have you told people about your project and about your destination France?

Frederikke Actually, I haven't recommended anyone to choose my particular project, not because it wasn't good but because I felt like... I wouldn't recommend it to everyone, and if I recommended it to them, they would have too high expectations. It's a project that you should come to with as little expectations as possible to get the most out of it. But the EVS in general and France, I really recommend them to... and also I know that some of my friends they went on projects after they had talked with me, and most of them are really happy that they did it. I'm sorry what was the question again?

Interviewer What have you told other people when you recommended the EVS programme?

Frederikke I told them that they shouldn't expect the great life. They shouldn't make up dreams. If they wanted a fantastic experience, to experience another culture and to live in another country for a long period of time... but still have that regular daily life without great sightseeing and tourist stuff all the days... if they wanted that kind of feeling and in-depth experience and experience the culture then they should do it. I really don't want them to think that it's just a year of vacation because it's not. And I think... when I think about it, I want to state that... because it's a wonderful experience but it can be very hard. Sometimes things are shit and sometimes very good. And I really think they should go but I don't think go if they think it will be just for fun.

Interviewer Ok. That was all the questions I had. Thank you for your participation.

## **8.21 Appendix 4h: Interview – Participant no. 48 (Clara)**

**Date for the conduction of the interview:** 25-11-2015

**Name of the interviewee:** Clara

**Destination of EVS project:** Frómista, Spain

**Length of stay:** 5-6 month

Interviewer Ok. So the first question is about before your EVS project. So my question is what was your travel experience before you started your EVS project?

Clara My travel experience within the country or just in general?

Interviewer Just in general.

Clara I've travelled a lot always, since I was a little girl. Very big trips with my family every summer. I think I never spent a July in Denmark, almost. Almost always travelling... mostly inside Europe. Not the bigger trips like camping or like a car trip or something like this. But also like a big trip... five weeks in Vietnam on something like backpacking. And then I lived a year abroad before high school on exchange... I went to California before high school as an exchange student. Before the EVS I went on three interrails I think. First with two girls, then with three girls and then another time with four girls. Generally, in high school as well I would always... every single vacation, maybe fall or spring or... maybe not Christmas, I would always go to maybe England or Paris or somewhere. I'm a big travel fanatic.

Interviewer Then on your EVS destination preference. Why exactly did you choose Spain as your preferred EVS destination?

Clara Because I wanted to learn Spanish. Yeah, that was the only goal actually. But basically when I graduate from high school, I wanted to do some kind of voluntary service for a longer [period of] time and for a long-term. And I wanted to go to South America. I was very interested in the volunteer action culture but I find it kind of silly

that you have to pay 30-40,000 DKR to do volunteer work, and then somebody told me about the EVS and that you don't have to pay for it. And I thought ok when I don't have to pay for the EVS. Then I could go to Spain, learn the language and then I could travel to South America with my experience acquired. So that was actually good. I went to Spain to learn Spanish and then did my volunteer service where I didn't have to pay for it, and then used the money that I had saved up to travel for.

Interviewer Ok. The people who told you about the EVS programme... what did they tell you?

Clara They just... basically, I was told that you could volunteer in Europe for free... I think. I mean, it was very basic. But yeah, that's another debate but it's also... It's really a shame that there's low awareness about the EVS in Denmark because when I talk to my German friends or French friends, it's way more normal for people to go abroad for practical service, and in Germany you can do it instead of internships.

Interviewer Yeah. Did you manage to collect any information or did you receive any information before you arrived [at your EVS destination]?

Clara Yeah, of course. I mean, I always look into things before I do it. I was looking at information at the Internet in general and then I went on a departure camp with the AFS, American Field Service. It was just this organisation sending volunteers to EVS projects.

Interviewer Did you also manage to collect or did you receive any information about your specific destination before you arrived [at your project destination]?

Clara Do you mean the country or the exact place where I was living?

Interviewer The local place and Spain in general.

Clara I mean I had been in Spain, so I knew it from before. But it was very new to me how I ended up in... I don't know if I should re-explain... I think I wrote about it in the survey, how I ended up in that area.

Interviewer maybe you can just explain it a bit more in details?

Clara That reason why I wanted to do the EVS as well was like... ok I can go to Spain for free and something that makes sense for a longer time and it was about the project aims... but it was also because I found a really cool project and I applied and it was on one of the Canary Islands, in La Gomera, And I planning to go there with my friends from Argentina. Then I got the [volunteer] job, and the company decided to go with this and I was like chosen to do it. And I was so happy because I really wanted to go

to the Canary Islands... and it was dream of like, you know, going to a very exotic place. And then I went to this pre-camp with AFS, and I remember heard... some people were going to other places away from Europe, or they would go to these places like Romania or Austria... and said that I was going Canary Islands people were like wow that's so cool, you know. And then... I was really thinking that I was going to do this, and I had never spoken Spanish before, I had French in school, but I was doing a little Spanish studies and I was going to quit my job. And then I got a notification that the project hadn't been approved by the EU... because they have to apply for this. But it didn't get the approval. But I was really in this mind-set that was going to Spain where La Gomera was the only option, and I had sent the application correctly but in the end the project didn't follow through [wasn't accredited by the European Commission]. But I really thought that it was going to happen. Bu it was really in my mind-set that was going to Spain, so I just applied to any other thing. And I found this one project in Northern Spain, far away from anything I had heard about. So I had no clue about that place before. I just knew it would be very different to La Gomera and something like a small village. I tried to find... of course you know... when you Googled it there were some pictures of the town. They had a tourism information web page. A lot of people it looked like was very religious because they had some big churches in the town. And it's the town of the Camino de Santiago... you know this big walking thing goes on [pilgrimage walking tours], and there was information provided about this.

Interviewer During your EVS project, could you mention any specific situations that changed your perceptions of your destination?

Clara Well, I didn't really have any perceptions about the destination because it was very random. But I think that I really gained respect for rural life because I learned about rural life is that is where you find the most authentic life. I think it would have been a great experience to live in La Gomera, Barcelona or Madrid or something... but I think here [at the final destination, Frómista] I really learned about the deep Spain [authentic Spain].

Interviewer Yeah. I think you mentioned in the survey as well that you were working together with... was it two other EVS volunteers?

Clara Yeah.

Interviewer Did you at some point exchange perceptions about each other's countries?

Clara Yeah, all the time.

Interviewer Yeah. What did you talk about?

Clara We talked about our countries... I mean we lived together in this village, so we talked every day. So we talked a lot about many things about our countries. It was like "this is how we do it in my country, ok and this is how we do it in my country"... everything that goes from everyday life to how to cook pasta in the best way... and big political discussions about the state and political parties.

Interviewer Yeah. Do you remember any specifics on what their perceptions were about Denmark?

Clara Do you mean my co-volunteers or people I met?

Interviewer Your co-volunteers.

Clara Yeah. I guess it's just like this general idea that Denmark is a very modern and progressive country... very developed.

Interviewer Yeah. Did you manage travel a bit as well while you were working on your EVS project?

Clara Yes.

Interviewer Where did you go?

Clara Small trips around the area. I went to explore. I went up to Santander. And bigger trips to Barcelona. And I also went on these seminars, so like the mid-term and on-arrival camps... but both of them unfortunately were in our region because, you know, people [the volunteers] paid [the camps are free of charge to the volunteer]. We just had one [a seminar] an hour from where we lived. But actually... that's not something to do with my EVS... but I also went to Iceland during my time [as an EVS volunteer]. Yeah, that was with my ex-boyfriend, so I took two weeks there.

Interviewer Ok. What value did your travel experience at your destination add to your EVS project?

Clara A lot I think. Meeting people... I might be a little bit socially addicted. I think with the EVS, it was difficult for me because around very few people. I mean it was very interesting for me to learn to pick up the language with a 55-year-old woman. I mean the two best friends I got from there [at the project village] was 55-year-old woman and an 80-year-old woman. And also it was great experience... I'm used to the big

city Copenhagen, and I also got this experience travelling... so it was also nice that that I could travel away for some time to get this input of it all [the whole country]... meeting people who were also travelling and exploring the world. I also had an American friend who had lived arrived to Spain about two weeks before me... and he was a teacher in Granada in the south of Spain. So actually I also went to Grenada with the Italian volunteer. So I guess that is where I could say that was something I gained... that definitely strengthened our relationship because we went on this trip to Grenada and she [the Italian volunteer] saw some of my friends as well, and... we shared a car for like 10 Euros per person, and that was a really great way to travel around Spain. And then we meet many nice people, and we learned a lot about a big protest that was going on in 2009.

Interviewer Did you also discuss with the international EVS volunteers... did you discuss your perceptions of Spain in general?

Clara I mean we also at the camps, the mid-term camps and stuff like this, we always had to do presentations about the regions in which we lived. So, in my region we were ... we became very good friends with all the other volunteers in the whole area. And [at the seminar] we did this dance show, and one of the Italians was playing this big music instrument, and then we would play the official song of the area where we lived. So it was like focusing very much on different cultures. And statistics about Spain that I really didn't know about... there was like these 17 big regions and four National Agencies [working with the EVS].

Interviewer So after your EVS project... when you look back on the different preparation and evaluation seminars... could you add something extra about these seminars on how it formed your perceptions about Spain?

Clara You mean the camps?

Interviewer Yeah.

Clara I mean just... I learned facts. I guess what you can say that I learned was that Spain is not just one country... you know, there are 17 regions that are so various [different from each other]. There are like four languages, and some people [from different areas of Spain] won't have anything to do with each other. And also living in a my own small village [in the north of Spain] is so different from Malaga, Granada or Valencia. And I also learned a lot about different types of... like problems in different areas.

Interviewer Yeah. I think you mentioned as well in the survey that you recommended the EVS programme to others. What have you told others about the EVS programme and about your experience in Spain?

Clara That it's a really great opportunity to experience another culture for a longer... like, you know, for a longer period of time... and that it has great... at least my project because I heard about other volunteers who didn't go through the same experience... but I was very lucky to have a very well-structured programme that made a lot of sense. But I heard about a lot of people going for four month to orphanage... and, you know, this whole concept of voluntourism, and they were talking something about that they had to pay and were sometimes feeling that they were in the way, whereas I really feel that what we did there [ at the EVS project in Spain] made sense to me. And I didn't have any costs and that was great. And I really liked the mid-term camp. And I mean the National Agencies in Spain were really good. It was really cool that arranges games [at the camps] at stuff like this.

Interviewer I don't think you mentioned this in the survey but did you have any specific destinations that you absolutely didn't want to go to?

Clara Germany, Austria. Anywhere near Denmark I think. But I just really set my mind like... I want to do the EVS because of Spain and Spanish. I actually applied to a few projects in France. That was also for the language as well. I mean I know it sounds bad to be all this greedy about learning languages but it was just like I had already saved up a lot of money and I wanted to do a lot of things but I thought maybe I can do this first. It's just... I mean I love Germany and I love Austria. I have nothing against tourism. I was just the context.

Interviewer Yeah. That was all of the questions I had for you, so thank you very much for your participation.

## 8.22 Appendix 4i: Interview – Participant no. 50 (Julie)

**Date for the conduction of the interview:** 24-11-2015

**Name of the interviewee:** Julie

**Destination of EVS project:** Amman, Jordan

**Length of stay:** 5-6 month

Interviewer So the first question I want to ask you is about before your EVS project. What was your experience before you started your EVS project? Where did you travel to, for how long and with what purpose?

Julie I was an exchange student in Canada just after finishing primary school. Yeah, so that was probably my first real travel experience. I've never really travelled that much with my family. I was in Canada living with a host family and things like that. Yeah, that has been around a year.

Interviewer Why did you choose the EVS programme? I know that you mention the price, because it was for free and that had a lot to say, or?

Julie Yeah, I think it was the thought of having to spend six month just making money, saving up and staying at home... it didn't really seem that appealing to me. So I think that's mainly why I chose the EVS. Also because they... I feel like there comes a certain level of security with the EVS as well. Some other programmes, it seems like they just rather want your money. They don't necessarily want you to gain that much from it, and I think the purpose with the EVS is more like they want you to gain something and they want the whole community to gain something from it. So I think that... I liked that. And the fact that it was also long-term. I couldn't really see myself just going somewhere for just one month or two month. I think it actually has something to do with the fact that I learned a lot in Canada because I feel like you really don't go into depth with the culture that well if you only live like two month... like the more common thing to do on a volunteer programme.

Interviewer You also mention that... when you were talking about your destination preference, you mention that you initially preferred Spain, Portugal, the area of Caucasus and the Middle East. Why these destinations?

Julie I think Spain and Portugal was mainly because I took Spanish in school, so I felt that it would be a great opportunity to learn Spanish. I felt like it would be a waste of time basically if I didn't improve my Spanish at some point. Because, you know, learning Spanish in school you were only able to talk really... basic conversational... in a way. So I think that was probably my main reasons for those countries. Caucasus... hmm, I felt like... I've always felt it quite interesting, I'm not really sure why. Mainly because it's a place that no one really knows. And

then the Middle East. I didn't really know about if I would go to the Middle East until I found my project through EVS. But I always wanted to go to the Middle East. It would be an experience. And I applied there [for projects in the Middle East] even before I applied anywhere else, because we had an application deadline coming up... so I was like aah ok cool. I wrote an application really fast, and then three days later they [at the project] said ok we want you. So I said ok cool, and so I didn't really have to send any other applications anywhere.

Interviewer Ok. I think you mentioned as well that Jordan wasn't actually your first. Is that right, or?

Julie I think... It's weird looking back at it now because obviously I couldn't imagine have gone anywhere else than Jordan. But... yeah, I think it was a really good project and the opportunity to go to Jordan... I wasn't... I didn't know that you could actually go to Jordan with the EVS where I found my project. The project itself sounded really interesting. Otherwise my first choice would probably have been Spain if I was to choose from a country.

Interviewer Because of the language, or?

Julie Yeah, and because I always really wanted to go to Spain for a longer period of time. I guess I just realised once I had the opportunity to go to Jordan that you can always go to Spain. It's more easy to find something else... to find a project in Spain for a longer period of time rather than Jordan.

Interviewer You mentioned that you worked with some refugees. What more exactly was your project about?

Julie The project, it was about teaching in refugee camps and help in the refugee camps. So that was what I did most of the time. Also, we were planning individual projects, as well as write the blog... we had a blog that we [volunteers] had to participate in as well. Some of the other volunteers also did their project proposal in the organisation and stuff like that.

Interviewer You also mentioned in the survey that you did not prefer destinations like Northern and Central Europe. Could you explain the reason for this.

Julie I think as a volunteer experience... I just wanted to experience something a bit different. It was just a classical gap year, so it was about travelling somewhere where the weather was nice... and the culture a bit different. I wasn't that I never really wanted to go to this region. I just hadn't really thought about it.

Interviewer Before you went there, did you manage to collect or did you receive any information about Jordan as a destination, or?

Julie Very little. I was quite difficult to actually find people who had actually been there. I think there was one person in my sending organisation [Dansk ICYE] who went there on holiday. But they [Dansk ICYE] didn't really have anyone who had been there before me. I didn't

know much about it, which I also think was part of the experience. I remember actually feeling that I didn't want to know too much about it before going because I didn't want to start having... or imagining what it was going to be like.

Interviewer Yeah. Did you receive any information about your project before you arrived, or? What kind of information did you receive?

Julie A bit. I spoke with the coordinator [at the project] but I didn't really hear anything before I got my activity agreement. So, I didn't really know too much about it. Of course I read the blog about what the previous volunteers did, and I kind of got an image of like what the tasks were going to be like.

Interviewer Then during your project. Could you mention any specific situations during your project that changed your perception of Jordan as a country?

Julie I don't know. I don't have any specific... It was something that happened gradually I would say. The first thing when I was at the refugee camp I realised that people don't live in tents. Yeah, I mean because they [the refugees] had lived there for like 50 years, so they don't live in tents anymore. That was kind of a surprise. And also to see the difference between refugee camps, and how it's coordinated... there is a big difference. Yeah. I don't know. I think I found out some of the most important things about the direction of Jordan, or something like this... talking to the people who volunteered out there. We worked with this community development in one of the camp, and there were also some local volunteers there. Lots of women didn't have that much to do during the day, so they would volunteer there [in the refugee camps], and I think that was probably where I learned most about their culture... because we would often spend lots of time drinking tea and talking. Just because your class starts at ten doesn't mean that the kids are there at ten. So, we spend a lot of time waiting, and there was time in between, and suddenly you were there 1½ hour earlier because of the busses and sometimes you're there an hour later because of the busses. So we spend a lot of time just hanging out, and a lot of time we were just hanging out in general. And on that basis people would actually get paid to do their work where they would just sit and drink tea... which was quite interesting.

Interviewer How did you feel about this? What kind of impression did it leave?

Julie It's quite different. I did actually... I liked it. I mean it was very different from Denmark. But I also... I mean I could not live there on a long-term basis because couldn't live this life on a daily basis... like time management... you know we'll get there, yeah, yeah, chill. I think most of the time I found it quite relieving but also very frustrating at times.

Interviewer Yeah. Did you have any other international volunteers that you worked together with?

Julie Yeah. I think it depends. We were sometimes... In the beginning we were ten volunteers living there, and we had two different camps that we could go to. And then we had... also you could also be in some of the more dodgy areas of Amman. And where we worked... I feel we were like 20 mostly [most of the time]... something like that. So we all lived close to one another and shared flats. Where I lived we were four people sharing a flat, and then the flat next door was also four people, and everyone was within about five minutes walking distance... that was cool.

Interviewer So you actually got a chance to talk to all of them, or?

Julie Yeah, of course I had some people I was better friends with than others. But I also learned a lot about other places in Europe actually, and that was something I didn't really expect to gain from it. Yeah but there were people from everywhere in Europe. It was just nice.

Interviewer So where were these international volunteers from? If you could just mention areas.

Julie Lots of people from the Baltic countries, many Latvians... then Germany, Romania, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Slovenia, Austria.

Interviewer Did you get to talk about your perceptions on Jordan while you were working with the other international volunteers?

Julie Well, of course we did. Yeah, I think we all tried to understand what was happening around us. We also had quite a few Jordanian friends. It was a bit different because our friends in Amman, they were very westernised Jordanians, and we didn't really... I mean we had a separate life with people in the camps... but we also lived in a very westernised part of Amman. We kind of also tried to separate these two things because we did party and we did go out, and that would not be something that would be acceptable if they knew about that in the camp. So, we really tried to keep the things separate. So we were living like we had one façade in the camp and we lived a different life in Amman. It was... It was... I don't know if it was technically necessary to do it like that. I was definitely more challenging if you would actually have to live the way that they would like you to live in the camp... if you would have twenty young Europeans to live like that. But we tried to keep it separately and not talk about our private lives in Amman. I think that also one of the reasons why we lived in Amman because we could also have lived out in Jarash [smaller village in the north of Jordan] where the camps were. We could also have lived out there but it would just have been a lot more difficult to separate work life and private life. Everyone would know where we were at... gossip travels extremely fast, haha.

Interviewer So you mention that some of the Jordanians in Amman they were westernised. Could you explain this?

Julie I mean... All of them had lived abroad at some point studying or something like that... and I think they would be considered to be quite modern and secular... not very religious. At least... they were not very religious in real life. In reality their parents wouldn't always know. I mean they would consider themselves atheists if you asked them, or if their family asked them they would of course be Muslims. So they were westernised, and I mean they would also go out on a Thursday night and have fun and drink and stuff like that but they would be living a double life also because they would never tell it to their parents.

Interviewer Did you manage to do some travelling while you were working in Jordan?

Julie Yeah, I travelled around Jordan a lot to see what there is to see. It's not that big of a country. And I also... I went to Oman and to Dubai, we found some cheap tickets there. And then after my project finished, I stayed for 4½ month after that, and then I went to Palestine for two weeks and travelled around Jordan.

Interviewer What kind of value do you feel that this travel experience added to your EVS project?

Julie I don't necessarily think it added a lot of value. I mean... I found it interesting to see how other parts of the Middle East worked. There are all sorts of big differences, certain aspect to Palestine and Jordan. And also... I think it made me realise what is special for Jordan and what is more... you could say not universal that's an awkward word to choose but what is more common. What was more common and not different. Yeah, so in that sense it was interesting. And also you came back [to the project] more motivated after you travelled because it does get everyday life at some point at that time because it's not common to have to sit in a bus for two hours and you get tired of everything. So yeah, in that way it was great.

Interviewer I actually forgot to ask whether you exchanged some perceptions about each other's countries?

Julie Yeah. I would say so. We did talk quite a lot about home. But many of them were also quite, I guess, international... they had lived in different places in Europe and the world. Yeah, so it was also very interesting to hear about. Especially... some countries I don't really know anything about... or, you know, you have certain prejudices. And then you meet people from these countries, and then you have some... you have some things about their perceptions as well.

Interviewer Then after your project. When you look back and look at the preparation and evaluation seminars, what effect do you feel that these preparation and evaluation seminars had on your general perceptions of your destination, if it had any?

Julie Yeah, For example I felt like I didn't really learn too much on the preparation training, especially because it was very repetitive of what I had heard before of being abroad as an exchange student. So it was like... alright, I kind of knew these things already. But I found the

end-of-project-training [re-integration seminar], like when I came back, I found that really useful. It was really great actually to talk about. I went to the training with my sending organisation three or four month after I came back, which is quite late but actually I liked it because most things I had already forgotten or not really talked about in a while and then suddenly it all just came back. I was a good way of processing how things were.

Interviewer Could you mention some of the things that you had forgotten... some of the things you discussed.

Julie Yeah, I think just about how we reacted to different situations, and also just the way that we lived. I didn't really... I didn't think that much about how to separate it before with the people we worked with, and how to live our lives before compared to those people that we interacted with in our daily lives. So that was interesting.

Interviewer Then the last question from me. You mention as well that you went out to challenge some of your perceptions and beliefs. Do you feel that you managed to challenge yourself in this way, and challenge your perceptions and beliefs about Jordan?

Julie I think so, yeah. I mean I obviously had some ideas of what it would look like once I got there... and what Jordan would be like. To some extent I found... I mean you can definitely find the crazy villages fanatic and the women wearing a niqab... poor kids walking around the streets when it's snowing without shoes on... but there's just so much more to it. So I think I feel the way that Jordan and the Middle East in general is presented in Western media is not really... of course you can find that but it's not necessarily representative for the country as a whole.

Interviewer Yeah. Ok, that was it for the interview. If you have anything else to add, anything that we haven't already talked about then you can tell that now.

Julie Well, I don't. Everything is said. Oh yeah I forgot to mention also... I went home for Christmas as well. That was another travel I did. A very strange experience just being back for a weekend. I think... yeah, some of the things I also learned about was for example how privileged we are in the western world. You just learn how quickly you just adapt because I remember, we didn't have that much water... water is a big issue in Jordan... and I remember that we had a tank on the roof from where we got water, and we got water once a week. Once the tank was empty, it would be empty until they filled it up again. So I mean you really do learn from... In two days you just run out of water, and there was no water or anything for doing dishes going to the toilet to take a shower. But it's definitely something that I thought about after that you just take so many things for granted here [in Denmark] that, you know, down there that was just how it was. We didn't really think about it. We just adapted. We couldn't take as many showers as we wanted to.

Interviewer Yeah. Ok, that was it for interview. Thank you very much for your participation.

### **8.23 Appendix 4j: Interview – Participant no. 53 (Sofie)**

**Date for the conduction of the interview:** 23-11-2015

**Name of the interviewee:** Sofie

**Destination of EVS project:** Agadir (Ait Melloul), Morocco

**Length of stay:** 9-10 month

Interviewer First, I'm interested in knowing about your previous travel experience. Before your EVS, where did you travel, for what purpose and for how long?

Sofie Before travelling to Morocco, I've been in Nigeria on a School trip... like an exchange school trip. And besides that I've only been on vacations in Dubai, Greenland, Tunisia, France. Shorter stays.

Interviewer So about one or two weeks?

Sofie One or two weeks, yeah. But I've been to Nigeria, and that was the only longer trip before that [before the EVS] like cultural exchange.

Interviewer So what did you do there [in Nigeria]?

Sofie I lived at a boarding school for about one week, a school class. And then I lived at a Christian home for another week or so, where we were visiting an orphanage and hospitals and boys homes, and things like that.

Interviewer What exactly made you choose the EVS programme, rather than any other volunteer programme?

Sofie Because it was paid for. I could go for free. But my... because I went outside of Europe then I had to pay like 10 percent of my flight ticket or something like that. But it was almost free. I think paid 500 [DKR] for nine month.

Interviewer Why did you choose Morocco?

Sofie I think it was mostly the project but I got four opportunities, and this one [the project in Morocco] was at a nursing home for elderly people. I don't know... I thought it could be funny to work with old people, and experience the culture because in Denmark it's normal to go to a nursing home but down there [in Morocco] it's very abnormal. So I'd like to see the

culture about... if it was a shame [brought shame over the elderly going to the nursing home], or how they organised it and if it was only widows with no children who went there or, yeah. And I like old people also, so that's also a... I've also been working at a nursing home back here in Denmark, so yeah.

Interviewer So that was like a continuation of your previous experience?

Sofie No, I worked at a nursing home after coming home from Morocco. I also liked old people for like... to spend time with them. They're calm and have a lot of life experience.

Interviewer Ok. You mentioned in the survey that initially you preferred Eastern European countries and countries outside of Europe. Why I that?

Sofie I wanted to go to a country that was different from Denmark, and I thought if I went to England or Germany or a Western European country then it would be... I wanted to go to another culture, and I thought that Eastern European countries are very different from Denmark... or just to go outside of Europe. Just doing something different.

Interviewer So that was also the reason why you didn't prefer the Western European countries, or?

Sofie Yeah, like try something different.

Interviewer Then on the information that you collected before your trip. Did you manage to collect any information or did you receive anything from your sending organisation or your hosting organisation, or?

Sofie Information about the project, or information in general about Morocco?

Interviewer Both about the project and the destination Morocco.

Sofie I got a standard... just some documents about my project, the food, where I had to eat, where I had to live, and what my tasks were and something like that... and who had to pay my pocket money and practical information. I didn't know a lot about the project before coming there.

Interviewer Ok, and neither that much about Morocco, or?

Sofie No, I didn't know anything about Morocco. Before I signed for the project I thought that Morocco was an island, haha. So, I didn't know anything, and I know that they... maybe I have to mention that... I also chose Morocco partly because they speak French as their second language, and I had French in high school, so I wanted to become better. So that was what I knew... that they spoke French as their second language... that there were Muslims, and I think that they have a beautiful nature.

Interviewer Then about your project and the time during you project. Could you mention any specific situations during your project that changed your perception of Morocco?

Sofie Yeah, I don't know about a single event but I got a friend... a Moroccan friend whose is called Fatima. She was a few years older than me, and she was the only one of my colleague who spoke English, so I spent a lot of time with her. She was wearing a scarf, like a Muslim

woman. Most women down there [in Morocco] are very religious, and before I went there I had a lot of prejudgements about religion. And we discussed a lot about religion and Islam, and I think she helped me change my views about Islam and religion in all cases, like... why be religions, why she believes in God and why she chose to wear a scarf.

Interviewer Did you work together with any other international volunteers, or?

Sofie No, I was the only one in my project but there were three or four German girls in another city in the same organisation. So I could go there sometimes but I was the only one in my project.

Interviewer You mention there was four girls; I've noticed that in quite a lot of projects it's girls, was that something that you were told as well... that there was a lot of girls participating in the EVS programme in general?

Sofie Maybe, now that you say it... I can see... but I wasn't thinking about it before. But there is a lot of girls I think.

Interviewer While you were working at the project, did you have the chance to travel a bit around both in Morocco and a bit outside Morocco?

Sofie I didn't go outside of Morocco but I went to some different places in Morocco. I went up north, and I went to the capital Rabat. So, a little bit around... Marrakech and a lot of the different cities. It's cheap to travel down there, so if you have a weekend you can go without spending a lot of money.

Interviewer What kind of value do you think that your travel experience added to your EVS project?

Sofie I'm not sure I understand the question.

Interviewer That's ok... what did it give you as an extra experience to travel around the country and to see the country, and not just work in the country?

Sofie I think it added a lot of value because that was also what I wanted. I wanted to see the country. It was my year after high school and I wanted to travel and do some charity work, or... I don't know what's the right word... to make a difference, like all young people want... I wanted to make a difference and travel at the same time. So, it was a good mix for me.

Interviewer So now you say that you wanted to make a difference. Do you feel like that you actually had a chance to make a difference, or?

Sofie Hmm, no. The place where I worked, I was the first volunteer and I was the only volunteer. All the other people were paid to be there. So, I was like some extra labour but I wasn't allowed to do a lot of work because I was also their guest, and in Morocco it's impolite to make your guests work. So when I wanted to help they were like "no, no, no, just sit down and... eat something"... haha.

Interviewer How did you feel about that?

Sofie I was very frustrated because I went there to help and I didn't get to help a lot. I made some activities for the old people, and I helped... to give them showers... when they had to eat I helped out in the kitchen. But most of the time I was just walking around and talking to all the people because everyone was busy and I was just like... no one was telling me what to do, so I had to make up work for myself. I think they didn't know what a volunteer was exactly, and they just saw me as a guest for nine months.

Interviewer What kind of other thoughts about the culture did it start for you that they reacted in this way towards you?

Sofie I think that they thought that they were just being polite... that I should be happy not to work. But I didn't come there just to see them work. I came there to work and to make a difference... to make something and to be a part of their work and to help them. I don't think they really understood that. I think they thought I should just spend a nice time.

Interviewer After you returned back home, did you have some thoughts on what value the different evaluation and preparation seminars had for you? Did you feel that the difference seminars prepared you better for going abroad?

Sofie Yeah... yes, I think to some extent they did. Before going there we had one seminar where we met some people, some of the EVS volunteers who had been away before us. And they... especially one girl, she told me that "before I just thought that you would go away and everything would be like an adventure but down there it also becomes like the everyday... you eat, you work, you sleep. It really was like an adventure the first month, then things start to become normal and you don't... you shouldn't expect to just come down there and be happy... there are some problems too and you need to adjust, and you need to find yourself some habits in the everyday life"... you know what I mean?

Interviewer Yeah.

Sofie And you are also sometimes feeling alone as well... as I was the only international volunteer. She [the girls at the EVS preparation seminar] also told us about that sometimes it would be lonely and sometimes you just feel alone. Do you understand what I mean?

Interviewer Yeah.

Sofie You just miss Denmark. And I think the seminar gave me a realistic view of how it was to be abroad... before going there

Interviewer Did it also change your perceptions about the country these seminars, or?

Sofie I was the first one from ICYE to go to Morocco, I think... so I wasn't... there weren't really anyone who told me about the country. I just met with people from Africa but Morocco is very different from the other African countries because it's Arabic... so there are a lot of things that differ. So they couldn't tell me a lot about just being a local.

Interviewer Did you have a mid-term evaluation in Morocco as well, or?

Sofie Yeah, I had a local contact person and then three German girls. We had a weekend where we talked about the project.

Interviewer So, are you still in contact with those international volunteers, or?

Sofie Sometimes. But I haven't met with them since.

Interviewer Did you have any discussions with them about what they felt about working in Morocco and the culture, and some of the perceptions about Morocco?

Sofie Yeah, I talked with them a lot. We talked a lot about home [their home countries]. I was nice to talk with some who were in the same situation.

Interviewer Do you remember what you talked about, or what they said about their perceptions?

Sofie We talked about work. They were not in the same situation as me. Each one of them had one other volunteer at her place. And they were not like... they had a job there. They weren't like me in that way. But they were also told [by their Moroccan co-workers] to relax, so they were in the same situation... but they experienced some of the... how do you say it... organisational stuff... and cultural, there was a problem to communicate. And they [the Moroccan co-workers] didn't really organise everything like we do in Denmark and Germany... like, everything has a time, and they were not exactly in time, and if you make an agreement then you keep it, and... like that. They could help me if I had some problems and I could help them. Also about the social life... how to get friends and create friendships and about boys.

Interviewer What about after the project, now that you are back... has it inspired you to go somewhere else or to travel more, or?

Sofie I haven't really had the opportunity to travel more but... I went back to Morocco. I met an American man and his my boyfriend now, and after coming home I went back with him [the boyfriend] for two month. And I got another volunteer opportunity at the Danish organisation Kvininfo... and I think that... I got a lot of professional experience there... to work with different cultures... and that's what I want to do in the future. So even if I... how do you say it... my first project wasn't ideal, then I had the experience to out on my own, and to jo just take a chance or something. So living on my own... and realising it's not dangerous to go on your own. But I spend a lot of time on my own and that is really sad... but I can manage to travel on my own now.

Interviewer Then the last question here. You mention in the survey that you recommended the EVS programme to others... What have you told others about the EVS programme and life in Morocco, and your life in Morocco?

Sofie I will tell them it's so hard but it's not dangerous. Even though it was so hard and I missed Denmark when I was there [in Morocco]... I wouldn't miss it [Morocco]... but I'm happy that I went there. And it's free, so it can't hurt... instead of spending a lot of money [on a volunteer project abroad], and then you come there and it's nothing like you thought it would be, and you want to go home and you spend 40,000 [Danish] Kroner. So it's really unique. You can just take the chance and then say ok then I'll try it.

Interviewer Ok. That was it for the interview. Thank you very much for your participation.

**Note:** After the interview, Sofie mentioned that she changed to another EVS project in Morocco because she was feeling lonesome at the first project. She did not always have someone to talk to at the first project and therefore realised that she would not be able to stay at the project for the full duration of nine month, She stayed at the first project for four month and then changed to another project where she stayed for the last five month. At the new project placement, Sofie was, as opposed to the first project, working with younger people. Also, the new project placement brought Sofie closer to other international volunteers in Morocco. Although Sofie knew that she couldn't have stayed at her first project placement longer than four month, she says that she still have a good relationship to the people at the project, and it was a good experience that she will never forget. (This note was written with permission from the interview participant, Sofie. The thought about the changing of project placement came to Sofie's mind after the interview).

## 8.24 Appendix 5: Cross tabulations

### Motivations for participation in the EVS programme

	Altruism	Travel/ adventure	Personal growth	Cultural exchange/ learning	Professional development	The structure of the EVS programme	Right time/right place
	4	37	13	21	29	14	2
	5%	62%	21%	34%	44%	23%	3%
<b>Age</b>							
17-19	1	14	7	12	13	6	1
	4%	52%	26%	44%	48%	22%	4%
20-22	1	17	5	6	10	7	1
	4%	71%	21%	25%	42%	29%	4%
23-28	7	1	3	6	1	0	1
	10%	70%	10%	30%	60%	10%	0%
<b>Gender</b>							
Male	0	8	2	1	5	1	0
	0%	80%	20%	10%	50%	10%	0%
Female	3	30	11	20	24	13	2
	6%	59%	22%	39%	47%	25%	4%
<b>Education</b>							
AP degree, Bachelor's degree and above	1	6	1	2	4	1	0
	13%	75%	13%	25%	50%	13%	0%
High School + 10 <sup>th</sup> grade	2	32	12	19	25	13	2
	4%	60%	23%	36%	47%	25%	4%
<b>Organisation</b>							
AFS Interkultur	1	12	4	4	10	4	0
	6%	67%	22%	22%	56%	22%	0%
Dansk ICYE	2	26	9	17	19	10	2
	5%	60%	21%	40%	44%	23%	5%
<b>Previous visit</b>							
Yes	0	7	2	6	4	5	1
	0%	70%	20%	60%	40%	50%	10%
No	3	31	11	15	25	9	1
	6%	63%	22%	31%	51%	18%	2%
<b>Previous volunteer experience abroad</b>							
Yes	0	7	2	6	4	5	1
	0%	70%	20%	60%	40%	50%	10%
No	3	31	11	15	25	9	1
	6%	63%	22%	31%	51%	18%	2%

### Change in perceptions/destination image (positive or negative)

	Mostly positive	Neutral/no change	Mostly negative	Had no/very limited knowledge or few perceptions pre-visit	N/A
	29	26	1	9	2
	48%	43%	2%	15%	3%
<b>Age</b>					
<b>17-19</b>	16	9	0	7	0
	59%	33%	0%	26%	0%
<b>20-22</b>	11	11	1	2	0
	46%	46%	4%	8%	0%
<b>23-28</b>	2	6	0	0	2
	20%	60%	0%	0%	20%
<b>Gender</b>					
<b>Male</b>	3	6	1	2	0
	30%	60%	10%	20%	0%
<b>Female</b>	26	20	0	7	2
	51%	39%	0%	14%	4%
<b>Education</b>					
<b>AP degree, Bachelor's degree and above</b>	2	4	0	0	2
	25%	50%	0%	0%	25%
<b>High School + 10<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	27	22	1	9	0
	51%	42%	2%	17%	0%
<b>Organisation</b>					
<b>AFS Interkultur</b>	5	9	0	3	1
	28%	50%	0%	17%	6%
<b>Dansk ICYE</b>	24	17	1	6	1
	56%	40%	2%	14%	2%
<b>Previous visit</b>					
<b>Yes</b>	5	7	0	0	0
	50%	70%	0%	0%	0%
<b>No</b>	24	19	1	9	2
	49%	39%	2%	18%	4%
<b>Previous volunteer experience abroad</b>					
<b>Yes</b>	5	8	0	1	0
	38%	62%	0%	8%	0%
<b>No</b>	24	18	1	8	2
	50%	38%	2%	17%	4%

## 8.25 Appendix 6: Thematic analysis

**Table: Thematic analysis**

Themes/interpretation	Quotes
<p><b>1) Before EVS experience</b></p> <p>1. Prior travel experience.</p>	<p><b>Gitte:</b> So before my EVS I had only been on holidays for a short period of time to places in Europe mainly and together with my parents. I've been on holiday to Mexico with my aunt and I've been to France. It was mainly just for a short time. (Starting from line 10 in the transcript)</p> <p><b>Anders:</b> I travelled quite a lot I think to European destinations with my family. Then after high school, I worked to save up money, and I went to South America twice. First time I was two month in Chile with two friends, and the year after I was travelling around for four month with a friend backpacking. And I've also done interrail. (10)</p> <p><b>Clara:</b> I think I never spent a July in Denmark, almost. Almost always travelling... mostly inside Europe. Not the bigger trips... like camping or like a car trip or something like this. But also like a big trip... five weeks in Vietnam on something like backpacking. And then I lived a year abroad before high school on exchange... I went to California before high school as an exchange student. Before the EVS I went on three interrails. (12)</p> <p><b>Frederikke:</b> I had travelled a bit with my parents for vacation and stuff in Spain, England, France a bit as well, Norway and Sweden... so around in Europe a bit. And then I've also been on a language course for three weeks in France during high school.</p> <p><b>Julie:</b> I was an exchange student in Canada just after finishing primary school. Yeah, so that was probably my first real travel experience. I've never really travelled that much with my family. I was in Canada living with a host family and things like that. Yeah, that has been around a year. (10)</p> <p><b>Nanna:</b> I've only been travelling on holidays with my family before I went to Munich in Germany. Basically, for one week or two weeks in different countries in Europe. (...) I went to London... I</p>

went to Hungary, Wales, Austria, Sweden and Norway... hmm, I think that's it... I went to France as well. (10)

**Rikke:** [I]t was quite close to Paris on my project. So I stayed in Paris... I hadn't seen the... it was sort of in a rural area in the outskirts of Paris [the EVS project]... but I've been to Paris. (10) (Prior visit: Rikke visited Paris not far away from her EVS project in the outskirts of Paris)

**Rikke:** I've been to Morocco once on an exchange trip with an association, so we travelled around from city to city, We were hosted by a ministry... but I really liked that. That was a nice trip, and I really saw a lot of Morocco. But I haven't been on my own discovering any countries outside Europe. (58)

**Sofie:** Before travelling to Morocco, I've been in Nigeria on a School trip... like an exchange school trip. And besides that I've only been on vacations in Dubai, Greenland, Tunisia, France. Shorter stays. (9)

**Cecilie:** [I]n general I travelled a lot with my family. And I went together with a gymnastics team to Brazil a couple of years ago. So I travelled a lot with my family I think. That's one of the reasons I wanted to go. (21)

**Cecilie:** I've been to Croatia a couple of times but always at the coast. (70)

**Cecilie:** I was in my first gap year, and then I decided that I wanted to go to Asia, and I found ICYE. And I was there for two month in the Philippines... short term, on a programme called STEPS [one of Dansk ICYE's own volunteer programmes], where you are a volunteer at a host organisation. I was there [in the Philippines] at a school teaching English and physical education. (11)

**Camilla:** I only travelled with my parents. I was not so old. I was only 19 when I went to [the EVS project] Czech Republic, so it was only like holidays with my family and stuff. (...)we have been to France and Italy and Croatia and Austria... Turkey, Lanzarote. So all of the warm places. (9)

2. EVS and destination preference.

**Frederikke:** I think... I had never really travelled in Eastern European countries, and I didn't really have any interest in the culture at that point. I simply didn't find it interesting. I think that I never really heard anything about it. There was a lot of different countries that I didn't really know anything about... so that was the reason. It was just something that I never really thought about, and it wasn't something that I really thought that now I'm going to study... It was more the well-known countries that I was interested in. (41)

**Julie:** I think Spain and Portugal was mainly because I took Spanish in school, so I felt that it would be a great opportunity to learn Spanish. I felt like it would be a waste of time basically if I didn't improve my Spanish at some point. Because, you know, learning Spanish in school you were only able to talk really... basic conversational... in a way. So I think that was probably my main reasons for those countries. Caucasus... hmm, I felt like... I've always felt it quite interesting, I'm not really sure why. Mainly because it's a place that no one really knows. And then the Middle East. I didn't really know about it if I would go to the Middle East until I found my project through EVS. But I always wanted to go to the Middle East. It would be an experience. (31)

**Rikke:** I think I went there [Paris, France] for vacation with my family. We were there for like ten days for Easter vacation. I wasn't that old really but I just remember that I really loved it. But the rest of my family were not the biggest fans of the city... but I was like, I really loved this city. So it wasn't because I was applying for Paris when I wanted to go, it's just like I've been to France before as well and I loved the country and also like the city... it was really gorgeous. (16)

**Gitte:** I really just wanted to improve my English. So I guess that was the main reason why I wanted to go to the UK and not some other countries. (25)

**Camilla:** I had Spanish on a high level and I really wanted to learn... to speak it fluent. So I really wanted to go to Spain, and all other people also wanted to go to Spain... so it was very difficult to get a place there my sending organisation said that maybe I should open my mind a bit and try some more countries. So I said ok let's give it a chance.

(...)Actually I only applied for one project in Czech Republic. I applied for so many projects in southern Europe and I wanted this southern cultural experience. And then there was this project where the work sounded really nice... it sounded like this was something I really wanted to try, so this was the only project I applied for in Czech Republic. (32) (As stated in the survey, Camilla's final destination was Czech Republic).

**Clara:** I wanted to learn Spanish. Yeah, that was the only goal actually. But basically when I graduated from high school, I wanted to do some kind of voluntary service for a longer [period of] time and for a long-term. (23)

**Sofie:** I wanted to go to a country that was different from Denmark, and I thought if I went to England or Germany or a Western European country then it would be... I wanted to go to another culture, and I thought that Eastern European countries are very different from Denmark... or just to go outside of Europe. Just doing something different. (39)

**Sofie:** I think it was mostly the project but I got four opportunities and this one [the project in Morocco] was at a nursing home for elderly people. I don't know... I thought it could be funny to work with old people, and experience the culture because in Denmark it's normal to go to a nursing home but down there [in Morocco] it's very abnormal. (25)

**Anders:** So it all started with my friend saying "hey, would you like to go to Moldova for ten days on a training course, where you only pay ten percent of the flight ticket". And it just fitted perfectly with my schedule. I thought it was great that you have this training course in communication and presentation. Apart from that... when you go on these courses, you also hear about the European Union started programmes, and that's why I knew about the EVS before... but now I really considered going. (...) [I]t had more to do with my schedule than the destination actually. When I came home from Moldova I went to AFS, the Danish [sending] organisation because they had a presentation about the EVS. And so... if I wanted to go after the summer, it was some years ago, then due to the [application] deadlines I could only choose between two destinations, Armenia and Romania. Because of my stay in Moldova, I had already met a lot of Romanians there, so yeah I just knew that would be cool. So, it is... I mean it was one of the

<p>3. Knowledge and perceptions about EVS project destination; Information collected and received.</p>	<p>destinations where I liked to go because I knew some Romanians, and I knew that the language. (29)</p> <p><b>Nanna:</b> I searched for a lot of EVS programmes but I didn't get any, and then my neighbour had this project in Germany... actually I didn't want to go to Germany because I didn't want to speak German... I hated German, and therefore I didn't want to go there. But he had a project in Germany, so I took it and I went there, and now I love German and Germany... funny how it changes. (27)</p> <p><b>Cecilie:</b> I didn't really choose the country, I just chose the project and it was in Croatia. So it just was a natural thing. (32)</p> <p>[T]hey [the sending organisation Dansk ICYE] suggested some different projects and this one [in Croatia] sounded the nicest. And then Croatia was just where it was so... I think I would have taken it if it was in other places as well. (36)</p> <p>There was something about working near the Camino [in Spain] where people walk, and I could... I think it something in a communications office or something like that. But I think that was three or four month, so that was too long. And they [the ICYE office in Denmark] suggested something different, I can't remember what, but this one [the project in Croatia] sounded the nicest. (40)</p> <p><b>Sofie:</b> I didn't know anything about Morocco. Before I signed for the project I thought that Morocco was an island, haha. So, I didn't know anything, and I know that they... maybe I have to mention that... I also chose Morocco partly because they speak French as their second language, and I had French in high school, so I wanted to become better. So that was what I knew... that they spoke French as their second language... that they were Muslims, and I think that they have a beautiful nature. (55)</p> <p><b>Camilla:</b> I Googled a bit and my mom gave me a book but... yeah, I did not really know what to expect down there. I didn't know the country at all. I got so much more information after [the arrival]. (66)</p>
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**Clara:** (...) it was really in my mind-set that was going to Spain, so I just applied to any other thing. And I found this one project in Northern Spain, far away from anything I had heard about. So I had no clue about that place before. I just knew it would be very different to La Gomera [Clara's first choice destination in Spain] and something like a small village. I tried to find... of course you know... when you Googled it there were some pictures of the town. They had a tourism information web page. A lot of people it looked like were very religious because they had some big churches in the town. And it's the town of the Camino de Santiago... you know this big walking thing goes on [pilgrimage walking tours], and there was information provided about this. (70)

**Frederikke:** I think... I was in contact with one of... a great person who was in charge of the EVS volunteers, and then they had a website... the project and the place where I lived [in France]... and I remember that I was checking out some YouTube videos as well about the place. And I also had a description of the project and stuff. I also remember that I didn't want to know too much because it shouldn't be some expectations I had made up, or something... I didn't want to have too high expectations. I really wanted to go there and experience it without any judgements. (72)

**Nanna:** I searched for a lot of EVS programmes but I didn't get any, and then my neighbour had this project in Germany... actually I didn't want to go to Germany because I didn't want to speak German... I hated German, and therefore I didn't want to go there. But he had a project in Germany, so I took it and I went there, and now I love German and Germany... funny how it changes. (27)

**Nanna:** I got the information about tourist destinations when I arrived. I didn't need to know about all of the touristic places before I went there because it was all about the project, and what I was coming to and so on. (41)

**Nanna:** Some from my school, not in high school but, you know, before you start in high school, in 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade or so... a lot from my class were very negative about the German people. And we went there as well in 7<sup>th</sup> grade I think. We went there to visit a German family, and they went to Denmark to visit us (...). They were very negative

about the German people, and I think that's why I was a little bit negative before I went to Germany. (47)

**Julie:** It was quite difficult to actually find people who had actually been there [to Jordan]. I think there was one person in my sending organisation [Dansk ICYE] who went there on holiday. But they [Dansk ICYE] didn't really have anyone who had been there before me. I didn't know much about it, which I also think was part of the experience. I remember actually feeling that I didn't want to know too much about it before going because I didn't want to start having... or imagining what it was going to be like. (73)

**Gitte:** I looked at the projects website and I talked with my host organisation and the director at the organisation that I worked at... or volunteered at. Yeah, I did get some information, and looked at maps and stuff like that. Yeah, I knew a little bit about it. (37)

I first talked with Neil from my host organisation. I think he told me about how it was to be a volunteer there, what the previous volunteers had experienced, what the place was like... and the village [village nearby Southampton]. (43)

**Anders:** I read about the project and all that stuff before. I don't think I received anything specifically about Romania... mainly about the organisation. (68)

**Gitte:** I guess I just thought that England was a bit like London (109)

**Cecilie:** I've been to Croatia a couple of times but always at the coast, where people are very interested in the tourists because it's the main industry. (70)

**Cecilie:** our host organisation sent us a lot of flyers, pamphlets and stuff about this is the place where we're going to be in, and our [host] organisation and information about Zagreb, so there was a lot of information. (48)

**Rikke:** I think it was quite late that I even got the acceptance, so I didn't know that much about my project. Even before I went there I was like... I didn't really know what I'm going to be doing. I obviously knew something about the area like

	<p>where am I going to be in the city, where am I going to live. And I also got to ask my organisation [receiving/hosting] obviously... ask them a few questions. But with all that said... because my acceptance was so delayed, they already started their summer season, and basically where I went in the summer season they were working all the time. So they never had time to answer me. The information before I left was sparse, definitely... which was... I was like whatever I'm just going [there anyways]. Yeah, I knew something, since it was France, Paris, and the region... I felt like I kind of knew something about it but not much. (69)</p>
<p><b>2) During EVS experience</b></p> <p>1. Change in perceptions/destination image.</p>	<p><b>Clara:</b> I didn't really have any perceptions about the destination because it was very random. But I think that I really gained respect for rural life because I learned about rural life is that is where you find the most authentic life. I think it would have been a great experience to live in La Gomera, Barcelona or Madrid or something... but I think here [at the final destination, Frómista] I really learned about the deep Spain [authentic Spain]. (82)</p> <p><b>Frederikke:</b> [T]he EVS experience itself... like that you're out of your own culture and that you meet new people... the internationals and the locals... that experience would have been the same in any other culture or country. It wasn't specific. It didn't matter that I was eating French food or something like that... that was not the experience that was the important one. And then I think, the meeting with all the other international volunteers had really broadened my view on where it would be interesting to travel and which countries that would be interesting to travel around. (52)</p> <p><b>Nanna:</b> I think the most important thing with these seminars was meeting other people from other countries: I don't think that we spoke so much about Germany because we were in Germany [during the on-arrival and mid-term seminars]. It was more about different countries and our countries, and what the differences between our countries were, and not so much about Germany (...). So I think I learned more about the other countries that the other volunteers came from than Germany on these seminars. But it changed my... what do you say... the way I see the other countries and the other cultures and so on. (148). (Effect of</p>

on-arrival camp and mid-term evaluation on destination image perceptions).

**Anders:** I think one of the biggest shocks was when I saw a sign that said that you can drive with your cart or horse carriage... It was something I have never seen in Denmark. That's something that you see people riding carts in the street, and quite early you could see that they haven't had other re-buildings since the fall of the Berlin Wall... they had torn-down buildings and so on. On the other hand, I must say that before I went there [to Romania] I did have some prejudices which was about gypsies everywhere and they were trying to steal from you... but I didn't have a single experience with something like that. Yeah, I didn't have any experience with crime. (85)

**Cecilie:** I've been to Croatia a couple of times but always at the coast, where people are very interested in the tourists because it's the main industry. In Zagreb it's more local I think. I cannot say that it was a big city like Copenhagen for example with a very international crowd but it's really Croatian... People don't know how to speak English very well and it is really smaller than Aarhus [2<sup>nd</sup> largest city in Denmark] size wise. So it's really like... at the university for example people really know each other, and that's really nice. So it was really like a village kind of feel, even though it is the capital and it's a big city. And they're very friendly but there's also like a language barrier that makes them [the Croatians] kind of private because they don't want to speak English with you. (70) (Change in perceptions – Perceiving Croatia as a country offering more than coastal tourism).

**Rikke:** I remember that we read this document, which was posted in schools, which was just about how the schools were supposed to be secular, so you couldn't have religious symbols... and all of these, I think it was fifteen or twenty rules for how you should behave and be dressed in schools for small kids. I found that quite surprising because it's not at all like that in Denmark, and I think that you would assume that our countries [Denmark and France] are quite similar. There were tons of these situations where I realised there is a big difference. It may seem quite small but it actually is quite important for the way you look at things. (108)

**Julie:** We worked with this community development in one of the camps, and there were also some local volunteers there. Lots of women didn't have that much to do during the day, so they would volunteer there [in the refugee camps], and I think that was probably where I learned most about their culture... because we would often spend lots of time drinking tea and talking. Just because your class starts at ten doesn't mean that the kids are there at ten. So, we spend a lot of time waiting, and there was time in between, and suddenly you were there 1½ hour earlier because of the busses and sometimes you're there an hour later because of the busses. (94)

(...)It's quite different. I did actually... I liked it. I mean it was very different from Denmark. But I also... I mean I could not live there on a long-term basis because I couldn't live this life on a daily basis... like time management... you know we'll get there, yeah, yeah, chill. I think most of the time I found it quite relieving but also very frustrating at times. (106)

**Camilla:** [T]he Danish people most only know Prague. That's the only place they know, and this is a tourist place and it's the capital. Yeah, I was living in another part [of Czech Republic] that was more poor. And I learned how different this country is just travelling some few kilometres. (71)

(...) I just remember when I got there and I saw the place I had to live, and I was just "oh do I have to stay here"... this area is so poor, so not Danish. I thought when I picked [chose] that country [Czech Republic] that was only 1,200 kilometres away from my home [in Denmark] it would not be that different. But then you really feel that they are an Eastern country. (96)

(...) To choose Czech Republic was already a bit strange for me... but it was also very positive that I went there. (48)

**Julie:** [Y]ou can definitely find the crazy fanatic villages and the women wearing a niqab... poor kids walking around the streets when it's snowing without shoes on... but there's just so much more to it. So I think I feel the way that Jordan and the Middle East in general is presented in Western media is not really... of course you can find that but it's not necessarily representative for the country as a whole. (201)

	<p><b>Sofie:</b> I got a friend... a Moroccan friend whose is called Fatima. She was a few years older than me, and she was the only one of my colleagues who spoke English, so I spent a lot of time with her. She was wearing a scarf, like a Muslim woman. Most women down there [in Morocco] are very religious, and before I went there I had a lot of prejudgements about religion. And we discussed a lot about religion and Islam, and I think she helped me change my views about Islam and religion in all cases, like... why be religious, why she believes in God and why she chose to wear a scarf. (63)</p> <p><b>Gitte:</b> Before I went to England, I didn't know how beautiful the nature is in England and then I went to places like the Lake District... I guess I just thought that England was a bit like London but it's not at all the case. There are lots of cool places. (108)</p>
<p><b>3) After EVS experience</b></p> <p>1. Effect of the EVS experience after end project</p>	<p><b>Frederikke:</b> [L]ater [after the EVS experience] I travelled and I saw a different practice in Eastern Europe, and... I don't know... I was just really interested, and it's definitely because I met those people [the EVS volunteers from the Eastern European countries] at that point. (65)</p> <p><b>Nanna:</b> I still speak with some off them. I'm hopefully going to a Turkish wedding in April [2016], one of the girls is getting married... she's from Turkey. (160). (Contact with other international EVS volunteers after end EVS project).</p> <p><b>Cecilie:</b> It's really nice that you can get friends from all over Europe. I have met with some of the people after our project was done... and that's really nice. (175)</p> <p><b>Sofie:</b> Even though it was so hard and I missed Denmark when I was there [in Morocco]... I wouldn't miss it [Morocco]... but I'm happy that I went there. (178)</p> <p><b>Julie:</b> In two days you just run out of water, and there was no water or anything for doing dishes going to the toilet to take a shower. But it's definitely something that I thought about after that you just take so many things for granted here [in Denmark] that, you know, down there that was just</p>

	<p>how it was. We didn't really think about it. We just adapted. We couldn't take as many showers as we wanted to. (216)</p> <p><b>Gitte:</b> I lived with two girls, two English girls who also worked at the project. And they just graduated from university. They became my friends and we're still friends today. So that was very nice. (50)</p> <p><b>Anders:</b> About Romania... I think basically what I've been telling you that I had my prejudices... I mean I did see lots of gypsies and you hear about gypsies all the time... it's like... I don't know. Basically it's like Muslims here [in Denmark], you hear about them all the time. But I think this was basically the message that I told... that it's really not like that... in that sense. It's out of proportion the prejudices that you have. (192) (Anders' comment on what he told others about Romania after return to Denmark).</p>
<p><b>4) Other themes</b></p> <p>1) The EVS programme vs. commercial volunteer tourism.</p>	<p><b>Rikke:</b> I also spoke to someone, and I think she said it quite nicely... I think that when you haven't paid for it you feel like you owe something. You feel like you have to work because... it was more like a pure experience of volunteering. If I paid a lot of money to go somewhere, I think I would have felt like I... like the place owed me because I paid to be there, so I was supposed to have a really good time. But when you get something offered, I think you're more willing to give of yourself, and you're more willing to also enjoy when it's not easy and to take on the difficulties and struggles. (42)</p> <p><b>Sofie:</b> (...) it's free, so it can't hurt... instead of spending a lot of money [on a volunteer project abroad], and then you come there and it's nothing like you thought it would be, and you want to go home and you spent 40,000 [Danish] Kroner. So it's really unique. You can just take the chance and then say ok then I'll try it. (180)</p> <p><b>Anders:</b> I have really been promoting that it's such a... it's just a unique experience. It's such a good offer that I'm really amazed that none of my friends really took the message and went [abroad with the EVS]. Yeah, just the whole travelling, I got a language course. You pay a little bit but you also get money at the place. (187).</p>

**Camilla:** I wanted to go abroad but really for a longer time like a year or ten month or something like that. But all other kinds of volunteer work was for three month. And I didn't want to go to these distant countries like somewhere in Africa or something like that. I wanted to keep it more simple but still a more different culture. With the EVS it was possible to go for a whole year. (20)

**Clara:** I was very interested in the volunteer action culture but I find it kind of silly that you have to pay 30-40,000 DKR to do volunteer work, and then somebody told me about the EVS and that you don't have to pay for it. (26)

**Julie:** Some other programmes, it seems like they just rather want your money. They don't necessarily want you to gain that much from it, and I think the purpose with the EVS is more like they want you to gain something and they want the whole community to gain something from it. So I think that... I liked that. And the fact that it was also long-term. I couldn't really see myself just going somewhere for just one month or two month. I think it actually has something to do with the fact that I learned a lot in Canada because I feel like you really don't go into depth with the culture that well if you only live like two month... like the more common thing to do on a volunteer programme. (19)

**Rikke:** I also quite liked that you had... first of all that you would not go that far, so then I could actually stay in contact with the place afterwards, and stay for a long time and really become a part of the life, whereas if I went to Venezuela or something and I stayed there for... even if I stayed for longer, I would have to go home and then probably not come back. So I imagined that I could get a closer relationship to my destination. (36)

