

An EVS project – and a fresh start



EVS and social inclusion

“ I think EVS was the best cure for mental health - better than any drug, therapist or doctor. The best thing I remember from the projects is the feeling of happiness.

Calum Barron

Calum Barron had reached a crossroads when he went on his first European Voluntary Service. Six years on, the path he chose has set him on the way to a happy and fulfilling life giving back to others.

Growing up in south Glamorgan in Wales, Calum Barron had a difficult childhood. Taking part in an EVS project made him feel there were more options open to him than before.

Calum initially took part in a one month EVS project offered to him by a social worker taking care of his mental and social welfare needs. This step into international volunteering in Poland paved the way for an eight month EVS project in Lithuania with Cardiff organisation UNA Exchange that would prove instrumental in changing his attitude to life.

Calum's agricultural placement in rural Lithuania involved working with local fishermen to cultivate local resources. The experience of working there made a particular mark upon him.

Following his EVS project in Lithuania, Calum went on to lead several youth projects in his local area and in wider Wales. He now has an apprenticeship with a Welsh landscaping firm. Calum volunteers in a homeless shelter as well as continuing his work as a 'big brother' for children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

Young volunteers coming under the social inclusion category can take part in a short term EVS of less than 2 months, followed by a longer 12 month term if they and their organisation wish. Read more about the support available in the [Inclusion and Diversity Strategy](#).



EVS had a life-changing impact on Calum Barron

Home country of the EVS volunteer: United Kingdom

EVS duration: 1 month, 8 months

Country where the volunteering took place: Poland, Lithuania

The European Voluntary Service (EVS) gives young people the opportunity to volunteer abroad. As an organisation you can get financial support to run a project involving one or more international volunteers in your activities.

Find out more: <https://europa.eu/youth/evs20>

#EVS20

