

Ten volunteers from various European countries have been living and helping out in the Biostatek farm in Valec, run by Voita and Lenka. Why were we here? Which porpouse made us to work together? No more no less than building a cellar using tires, stones, soil, wood, straw, beer caps, nails and plenty of hands ready to help. The project which made this possible was a workcamp organized by the NGO Area Viva together with the NGO Duha.

The participants, leaded by Darina and Anna, from Russian and Poland respectively, came from Italy, France, Spain, Russia and Turkey. All we enjoyed the wonderful peace and calm of the nature but we also had to face the difficulties of living in very simple conditions when the weather is not so nice. The volunteers stayed from 21st to 31st August and expected to enjoy the last days of summer. However, we found ourselves enjoying the first days of winter. Rain came to visit everyday but, fortunately, never in working hours. Making fire was said to be the best solution against the coldness and in the last two days of the workcamp, the volunteers could enjoy it in a tipi built up by Voita's friends. The participants slept in double wooden tents and cooked every day. Two people were asked to cook, making rotating shifts. Czech food was elaborated and we all had the opportunity to try the delicious dumplings in dill sauce. These 10 volunteers cohabited 10 days in Valec, trying to get to know how life is in such a small village. We went to the pub, to the local shop and took the bus in Valec. We also enjoyed the nice monuments of the village, visiting the gardens of the Castle and having a guided visit inside the castle Church, now in reconstruction.

Apart from Valec, we also had the opportunity to visit other cities and villages in the area. In ...? we enjoyed the medieval fest, we bought and ate in the stands and listened to Irish music concert. We also went up to the just renovated tower of the village. Very interesting was also the trip to Karlovy Vary. The volunteers tried the healthy water, so full of minerals that most of them couldn't manage to finish the cup. One of them, however, drank cups and cups of water, trying it in every spring he found. He was Russian, by the way. Maybe this is the reason for many Russians to go to Karlovy Vary. They just love the hot and healthy water!

Back to Valec, the volunteers went almost every day to the pond next to Biostatek farm and some of us had a bath there, while playing some group games.

It was nice to see people coming around the farm and it was also great to be able to see how the "old" system of exchange is still somehow in use. "I help you with your car and you give me some berries" or "I give you this and you give me that". It seems like if in Valec area everybody had what the other needed. This is the solidarity of the villages that it's probably getting lost in big cities.

As a member of the privileged group who had the opportunity to learn a lot in the Biostatek farm workcamp, I want to say thank you in representation of all my mates. Thank you to Voita, to Lenka and to all their friends who made our stay a really great experience. And, of course, a huge thank you to the nice dog Bacha and the lovely sheep living in the farm. Their "beeeeeeeee" sound is something we will never forget!