

VIR'VOLT SOLIDARITES JEUNESSES ILE-DE-FRANCE SAACY-SUR-MARNE

WHO ARE WE ?

Solidarités Jeunes (SJ) is a movement and an association of non-formal education which has solidarity, voluntary commitment and free political will as its core values. Our choices and our actions emphasize our vision for society, where progress is social, where the respect for all human beings and their environment is a fundamental and shared value, where freedom to choose, to dream and to resist is innate or fostered.

Our activities are organised for everyone, regardless of their gender, age, social and cultural background or nationality. Since its creation, SJ helps to create peace by facilitating intercultural meetings and exchanges here in France and abroad. As an institution of informal education, SJ works through participative pedagogy which encourages the individual to take initiative, values the commitment of everyone and gathers the forces and collective intelligences from all its volunteers, employees and supporters.

Solidarités Jeunes is consists of a national secretary based in Paris and eight regional delegations. Depending on the delegation, we host volunteers for specific periods of the year or all year round with volunteers coming from France or from all around the world. As part of our fight for solidarity and against social exclusion, our delegations and partners also monitor and host youngsters with fewer opportunities and/or difficult social backgrounds. All of our delegations and partners are situated in singular and original sites (castle, former camp-site, isolated villages in the heart of the mountains, former factory, etc.). These unique places have all been renovated by our various volunteers, employees and supporters who worked, lived and enjoyed an unforgettable experience there.

Did you know? The first workcamps were organised after the First World War in the region of Verdun in France, a place that itself had seen horrible events during the war. Several citizens from former opposed countries, voluntarily decided to join their forces and wills in order to work together to create peace in the interest of their communities.

Once upon a time ...

In 1995, a group of friends already committed as volunteers to Solidarités Jeunesses decide to create a Regional Delegation in Ile-de-France Region, which surrounds Paris. Those friends wished to organize international camps in the region, mixing international participants, youngsters in social exclusion, inhabitants and local participants. In 2007, the Regional Delegation **Vir'Volt** established its office in the north-east area of the region in order to reinforce its territorial implementation in the area. Since then, the association has developed active partnerships with locals and inhabitants, as well as local associations and public partners.

Vir'volt's objectives are the voluntarily participation of everyone, especially of youngsters and people with fewer opportunities within local, national and international projects, and the concrete construction of peace.

The **activities** of the delegation include actions in favour of the local cultural heritage or environment, intercultural workshops, activities in the local schools and a professional training program for local youngsters. Vir'Volt also continues to organise international workcamps in the region around Paris.

The work rhythm in the delegation is widely influenced by the seasons: From may to august, the main focus lies on international work camps and projects and from September to April, the volunteers and other members of the team participate in local constructions or work in the house in Saacy in order to get used to the lifestyle and to develop their personal abilities in the field of physical work. As the voluntary service starts in September, you will have enough time to get familiar with your new duties and responsibilities as well as with the concept of Vir'Volt and the collective lifestyle.

For the people from further away, this first period also allows to get used to the French language and the different lifestyle.

The objective is also that the new volunteers will participate at a work camp leader training in the end of April so that they will be safely able to animate one or two of these camps later in the year.

Don't worry! During the year you will be trained both formally and informally in the fields of technical ability, budgeting, animating youth groups and in the intercultural and ethical context of an organisation like Vir'Volt !

In Vir'Volt like in all the delegations of SJ the values of sharing and exchanging are applied in the daily life and in the personal relationships, for example, the lunches are prepared by a kitchen team of two people (preferably volunteer/ local youngster) and personal dietary needs of everyone are gladly accepted and considered. Like that, everyone is able to discover and to share alike! In this sense, you are also invited to propose and animate activities in local schools or in the community!

VOLUNTEERING

Voluntary work is an exchange and a meeting between people who offer their time, their energy and their views to the benefit of a social project of common interest. It is also a base for learning, experimenting and experiencing intercultural exchange and opens up the way for personal development. In SJ, volunteering is not to be confused with humanitarian help as it does not respond to an urgent emergency. Volunteering exists in every corner of the world, is very diverse and thus can be very different from what you might expect. The outcome of a project always lives from and depends on the association,

the local community or public people but most importantly, it depends on the private people who decide to give a piece of their time to make it happen !

Together we can make it happen, all while discovering ourselves and other cultures all around us!

The international work camps organized by SJ reunite between 12 and 15 people from different backgrounds and countries who will work together to realize a physical project that is beneficial for the community that hosts the work camp. Usually, one camp lasts for 2-3 weeks. These meetings also promote the idea of collective life and work. Furthermore, the harmonisation of rural and urban life and the exchange between the local people and the international volunteers is promoted. The work camps are lead by young animators who are there to facilitate the exchange between the volunteers and to ensure a happy work- and group dynamics. The main languages on our work camps are English and French.

THE PROJECT

Since 2016, **Vir'Volt association** is settled in a house in the heart of the town of Saacy-sur-Marne next to the Marne river.

The house hosts the office of the association and the team of international volunteers engaged in the association for long term missions (6 to 12 months) or shorter missions (1 to 2 months). During the week, there are also some local youngsters who are taking part in a training program which should enable them to determine their own professional future. They work, cook and eat with the volunteers to learn about different cultures, backgrounds and habits and also to obtain a more profound understanding of things like cooking, budgeting, cleaning and sharing.

In general, the organisation contributes to the valorisation of local cultural heritage through the realisation of international work camps which our volunteers will animate in the summer time.

Examples of our work :

- construction of a playground for a community
- Renovation of a building for a local charity organisation
- Collective life (meal preparation, cleaning, washing, food shopping...)
- Maintaining our garden (compost, herbs, vegetables, fruits, flowers)
- Planning projects to represent the organisation in the community, for ex. international meals
- Representing the organisation on fairs, meetings, exhibitions etc... in order to talk about volunteer and international mobility projects.
- Occasionally helping out to organise local events like carnival, christmas markets etc. with local partners





COLLECTIVE LIFE

The group consists of 5-7 international volunteers with an average age of 22 years, the local youngsters and 2-3 employees. One of these employees is the tutor of the volunteer team who will assure that the group life is working out for everybody and that there are no persisting problems in the daily life. Also, there will be a technical leader who train and accompany the group in the working area.

The languages spoken in Vir'Volt are English and French. We try to respect the personal linguistic abilities of every single person but be prepared to learn the French language as it will greatly enrich your stay here in France and will open up a lot of doors leading to new connections, new friends and new experiences!

Everybody takes responsibility here ! You will also be in charge of the household tasks and the kitchen : Don't forget to bring some local recipes from your country !

WHAT TO DO IN YOUR FREE TIME?

Volunteers can use their free time to participate at local animations or concerts which are often held in the Café culturel close by, discover the local cultural heritage of the Brie region and the Champagne or use the car of the association once a month to take a collective trip in our region. Furthermore, our village is surrounded by a rich, diverse nature which can be discovered on walks, hikes or bike rides. It is also possible to visit Paris, the capital of France, as there is a train station close to the house with a train bringing you to Paris in less than 50 minutes every hour.

ATTENTION !



the site !

Even if Vir'Volt is very close to Paris and other touristic sites, your stay here will not be of touristic nature ! If you will only spend a short time here in Vir'Volt, you should consider taking a few days before or after your project to visit the places that you want to see, as your main activity will be here on

ACCOMODATION

The first floor of the house is the personal area of the volunteers with a collective living room, a bathroom and the bedrooms, which are shared by 2 or 3 people.



HOW TO FIND US?

Saâcy sur Marne is located 69 km away from Paris in the department Seine et Marne..

GOING BY TRAIN OR BY BUS

From **PARIS – GARE DE L'EST (METRO lines 4, 5, 7)**

- Take the train **line P** to Château-Thierry and descend at Nantueil Saâcy station (there is a train every hour at 10h51; 11h51... until 23h51)
- **Duration** : 49 minutes - **Price**: 9.85€
- If you arrive at the airport Orly, take the RER B to Paris and the the métro to Gare de l'est.
- **From the airport Roissy - Charles de Gaulle :**

Take the bus 67 direction La Ferté sous Jouarre. Someone will pick you up there. See the Timetable here:

<http://www.seine-et-marne.fr/library/ligne-67-sept13>

Duration: 1 hour - **Price**: 2€

BY CAR

If you arrive by car, take the national highway Nationale 3 or the motorway A4, exit n° 18 "St-Jean-les-deux-Jumeaux"

To establish your route you can use the following website : www.mappy.fr .

ADRESSES

Association Vir'Volt - Solidarités Jeunesses Ile de France
42 rue chef de ville
77730 Saâcy sur Marne
Téléphone : 00 33 9 82 52 50 64
Portable: 0033 6 33 69 22 24
Mail : dr@virvolt.org

MORE INFORMATION

www.solidaritesjeunesses.org

<http://www.virvolt.org>

See you soon !
The team of Solidarités Jeunesses

