



# SEM&VOL

Délégation de Solidarités Jeunesses



**Solidarités Jeunesse** ([www.solidaritesjeunesse.org](http://www.solidaritesjeunesse.org)) is a youth and community education association, under the French law of 1901, belonging to several international networks. It organizes international projects, volunteer youth workcamps, training sessions ...

This movement brings together people of all ages, united around common projects and social responsibility practices, with the aim of acting :

- In favour of an active and responsible citizenship ;
- Against the exclusion of the most disadvantaged ;
- For local development respectful of the individual, the environment and cultural heritage ;
- To break down the boundaries between generations, cultures and nations ;
- For tangible peace-building actions.

In France, Solidarités Jeunesse consists of 7 affiliated territorial associations and 1 partner organisation. On the basis of commonly established goals, the affiliated associations reflect the dynamic of the movement at a local level. Most of these structures host international volunteers as well as young people in need of social integration and are involved in the local development of their regions through a variety of activities.

Altogether, the movement has over 1200 members, of whom 300 are involved in actions all year round.

**Sem&Vol** is the eighth independent association of the Solidarités Jeunesse Movement which, with the support of several public institutions, has developed partnerships in the Dordogne, Nouvelle-Aquitaine (a region in the south-west of France).

Since 2013, the year Sem&Vol was created, 7 European exchanges (Erasmus+) have been hosted by the delegation (in Le Buisson, Cadouin, Le Bugue, Limeuil), bringing together many people from around the world and the local population. All exchanges were highly successful !

Between 2015 and 2018, Sem&Vol expanded its activities by proposing other local development and grassroot actions : over this period of time, around 30 international voluntary workcamps were hosted by different villages in the Dordogne.

Today, we wish to renew these activities and continue to develop our projects.

The association Sem&Vol, affiliated to Solidarités Jeunesse, works towards :

- the voluntary participation of all in social life – at local, national and international levels,
- a local development respectful of the individual, the environment and cultural heritage,
- intergenerational, intracultural, intercultural and international meetings and exchanges,
- tangible peace-building actions,
- reflection, practices and projects in the field of environmental education in line with a sustainable development approach.

The association is also expanding the action of the National Movement of Solidarités Jeunesse in the Dordogne, supporting the momentum in favour of rural life, in order to allow as many people as possible to :

- actively contribute to the development of their region (cultural heritage, heritage sites, environment, social life, ...),
- take part in national and international mobility programs (short-, medium and long-term volunteering),
- have access to diverse cultural and intercultural practices (territory development, presence of international volunteers, european exchanges),
- benefit from the resulting dynamic atmosphere which encourages people to get involved in other projects and actions adapted to the Périgord (the Dordogne),
- connect with people, create new openings and broaden theirs horizons.

### **The operational objectives of our actions :**

- **The development of our « short-term » projects in our area of action** (workcamps, international exchanges, training sessions, welcoming groups ...) in order to enable local youth to have an international experience close to home and to gain more autonomy through intercultural and interpersonal learning as well as the experience of community life.
- **The hosting of local youth on civic service missions and volunteers under the European Voluntary Service programs**, to help develop our association and promote the different activities we carry out in our region. Most of our activities with the local population will be focused on **cultural activities** ( in partnerships with schools and youth associations), particularly in the development of **video, photo and audio activities** in cooperation with art and experimental cinema of the village.
- **The increase of information campaigns** targeting local youth through the structures they go to (training sessions, forums, presentations in secondary schools, « local missions » – community aid projects for young people – youth information centres, ...) in order to inform them about international mobility, civic engagement and volunteering – among other values upheld by our association.
- **Follow to renovate the hosting center, for more comfort and space for its volunteers. The conversion of this space, in the former primary school of Cadouin (24) into an accommodation facility** started in 2018. Now we are enable to host people from different horizons and backgrounds, medium and long-term volunteers, and young people with fewer opportunities ; it would also be used as a training and information centre.
- On a broader level, through our actions, **to work towards breaking down barriers between different publics**, and to work on projects where the experience of living and working together contributes to the fight against social exclusion.

As a continuation of the projects backed by Solidarités Jeunesses in the area, we are entering into partnerships with different municipalities of the county (Dordogne), as well as with public institutions and local associations.

Each project is designed in partnership with a local organisation and our involvement provides support to a local action by bringing the international component and our popular education values.

With regard to our financial partners, we wish to maintain our partnership with the Nouvelle Aquitaine region, the Dordogne department (county), the Regional Youth and Sports Council, the territorial community (« communauté de communes ») of the Vallée de l'Homme. Furthermore, we would like to enter into new partnerships with other territorial communities and the Joint Association of the Vézère River Basin in the Dordogne.

## **HOSTING OF VOLUNTEERS :**

### **Why ?**

Hosting French and international volunteers is a fundamental part of our mission: these medium and long-term exchanges are the direct expression of our values and will contribute to our territorial outreach. They will also help transform a disused school into a community living space. Cadouin's inhabitants were deeply affected by the closing of the school at the end of 2015 and most of them are looking forward to the transformation of these premises. Several rooms have already been made available for local cultural associations and the village wishes to put part of the building at our disposition.

Concerning the volunteers, they will each have the opportunity to acquire new skills, to develop their own creativity and to share their own knowledge (practical skills, interpersonal skills, intellectual and cultural knowledge) : all the various activities developed by the association aim at bringing together people from different horizons in order to give them the chance to build a fairer society together and to develop their critical thinking through concrete actions.

### **Where ?**

The association Sem&Vol is located in the Dordogne, in the Périgord Noir (Black Perigord). Its registered office is situated in the village of Cadouin but the association is active throughout the entire department, right down to the Vallée de l'Homme (Valley of Mankind), known for its prehistoric sites, and onto the Land of Bastides, further south. This is where the association was created, in a village called Le Buisson de Cadouin, on the occasion of its first international project.

In 2015, when the school in Cadouin had to close due to a shortage of children and the proximity of the school in Le Buisson, the municipality offered us the use of the premises to host young people coming from elsewhere.

The school is situated in the centre of the village – a small vibrant and welcoming village of only 300 inhabitants, which is attached to the larger rural community of Le Buisson (around 2600 inhabitants).

The municipality and the local counsellors of this rural community have been organising activities hosting young europeans since 2013; they are deeply involved in local associative life and youth policy planning as well as being interested in the dynamics of international mobility.

A total of nearly 50 associations are to be found in Le Buisson and its neighbouring villages (Cadouin and Paleyrac). They are spaces for public debates, run principally by committed volunteers. They offer the opportunity to learn about community living skills and encourage citizenship awareness. These associations play an important role in the rural community and are the backbone of many activities which take place there: sport, leisure activities, cultural activities, cultural heritage and social actions...

In a very rural context, the main economic activity is cultural and green tourism. It is a lively rural community lying in the heart of unspoilt land, by the Dordogne river, close to a forest of 25 000 hectares, surrounded by vineyards, medieval fortified towns („bastides“), medieval castles, prehistoric caves and shelters (Lascaux, Les Eyzies, Maxange): the quality of life there is high. The population living in the area is mainly working class but many inhabitants work in Périgueux, Sarlat or Bergerac : Le Buisson de Cadouin is located between these three towns.

To learn more about the area, go to this link:

<https://www.pays-bergerac-tourisme.com/fr/decouvrir/villages-pittoresques-et-bastides/cadouin>)

## **What will you be asked to do?**

Right from the start, Sem&Vol – association affiliated to Solidarités Jeunesse – chose to focus its priorities on local development through activities undertaken in partnership with the area's associative network. Every volunteer will be working with these local associations and institutions participating in existing projects and developing new activities depending on their abilities and skills (ex : leading extra-curricular activities, intervening in primary and secondary schools, organising activities for the EHPAD's residents – nursing home for elderly people, taking part in local festivities – marching band, theatre, fabricating scarecrows, etc.)

At the same time, we wish to host and organize specific projects with groups of local young people as well as with young people in difficulty and/or training groups. The volunteers will take part in these projects as well as in the setting up of actions to promote international mobility within the area (meetings, forums, sharing their experiences with groups of young people, encountering the association's institutional partners ...)

Also, we continue the renovation of the hosting center and permanent construction sites will be held every morning.

During summer, Sem&Vol organizes international volunteer workcamps in the area. They usually take place over a three-week period in surrounding rural communities. There are different kinds of workcamps: the renovation or restoration of local heritage sites (fountains, old public washing places...), the promotion of cultural heritage (recovery of historical memory and cultural identity through reports, exhibitions, ...), the protection of the environment (cleaning a riverbank...), the organisation of an arts and/or cultural festival...

One of the interests of these workcamps is to bring together people from all over the world and local people who have little international experience.

The volunteers hosted by our association will have the opportunity to take part in internal training courses in order to lead these international volunteer summer workcamps.

## **What kind of activities will you get to take part in ?**

The hosted volunteers come with the desire to experience community life (sharing responsibilities: cooking the meals, washing up, housework ...) but also to discover new activities with concrete learning objectives – for example, in manual, technical and linguistic apprenticeship.

We encourage volunteers to take on responsibility at different levels and we foster the learning of organisational and logistics skills; we also offer the possibility of exploring creative and artistic activities which can be used in workshops where people can express themselves verbally, corporally and/or artistically.

In this way, the volunteers will be actively involved in the development of our associative project and our activities. They will be given the opportunity, if they wish to, to develop a personal project in keeping with and in relation to the collective project.

Thus it is important for everyone to identify the needs and to assess the interests as well as the objectives to be reached. In this way, we seek to empower and guide the volunteers towards a certain amount of autonomy and active citizenship.

The activities organised with the volunteers will primarily be workcamp related activities and local development actions, particularly artistic and cultural projects.

Many of these activities will take place in the volunteers' accommodation premises or in the host village but also in neighbouring villages and throughout the Dordogne department.

The monthly timetable that we have established will give you the opportunity to gain technical knowledge and skills in various areas:

- the renovation of the old school (minor masonry work, woodwork, painting...) ;
- the development of environmental education and sustainable development projects (setting up of an educational garden, eco-building, etc.) ;
- the building of networks between local associations to guarantee better communication and a greater coherence in territorial actions ;
- the setting up of, and the participation in various activities such as interventions in schools, creative workshops tailored to specific audiences, local events as well as language classes once a week ;
- communications (presentations, creation of communication media for Sem&Vol, etc.)

Once a week, a group coordination meeting will take place to work with the volunteers on activity planning, budget management and to give everyone a chance to talk about their week. These moments of sharing also serve to defuse certain conflicts which are not uncommon in an intercultural setting. We propose a democratic and collective approach to decision-making in order to develop the positionning and critical thinking necessary for constructive cohabitation.

Typical week:

MONDAY TO FRIDAY

07h30-08h30: Breakfast

08h30-09h00: Housework

09h00-10h45: Work site/projects

10h45-11h00: Break

11h00-12h30: Work site/projects

12h30-14h00: Lunch and cleaning up after

14h00-17h00: Activities and local interventions – in schools, youth centres, nursing home (3 times a week), language classes, meetings (regulation and coordination)

19h30: Dinner

SATURDAYS and SUNDAYS are dedicated to the discovery of the region and French culture and, occasionally, to hosting groups and/or taking part in local cultural events.

**During their period of stay, all volunteers will contribute to :**

- bringing to life the Accomodation and Meeting Centre (in Cadouin) with particular emphasis on intercultural exchanges, international mobility and active & responsible citizenship ;
- the local coordination and development of the area by working alongside local associations as well as educational and community structures (rural centres, leisure centres, youth clubs, primary and secondary schools, ...) ;
- supporting projects carried out by rural communities or associations, notably by taking part in or leading international volunteer workcamps ;
- welcoming and involving people in difficulty towards social and professional integration.

We wish to welcome people from different backgrounds in keeping with our social equity values. Our aim is to enable everyone to develop skills but also to pass on their own knowledge to the others. We believe this will help each person to see him or herself as an individual within a group and to grow in respect and consideration for others.

We expect our volunteers to have a good understanding of our overall project and to be motivated to be part of a team. We regard volunteering as an exchange between a volunteer who offers his/her time and energy a community project and a host community which in turn provides the volunteer with a learning and testing ground as well as a space for personal development. Consequently, the most important element for our association remains the motivations and the willingness of the volunteers to invest themselves wholeheartedly in Sem&Vol.

**Do not forget :**

- Sleeping bag or duvet and 2 fitted sheets
- A good pair of walking shoes and work clothes
- Wet weather clothing and warm clothes
- Musical instruments, recipes, music, photographs, etc.
- Swimwear if you wish to swim
- Student card if you have one



For EU residents, you need to procure a European Health Insurance Card and bring it with you.

For non-EU residents, you need to take out an adequate social security insurance coverage for the duration of your stay and bring the attestation with you.

**How to get to Cadouin?**

The nearest airports are the airports of Bordeaux or Toulouse. You will then have to catch a train to the station of Le Buisson.

Information on train timetables and itineraries is available at <https://www.oui.sncf/billet-train>

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*We look forward to meet you!*

