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# Leyla Tahmazli

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## About Leyla



Before joining the project at FTVS, I was involved in several youth and social initiatives in my home country. I have always had an interest in community development, health promotion, and intercultural exchange. I studied public health at university, where I gained some experience in awareness campaigns and student volunteering activities. I value collaboration and learning through practical experience, which motivated me to seek new opportunities for both personal and professional growth. I also participated in a few sports and wellness-related programs, which I felt aligned well with the mission of FTVS. Before arriving, I researched the Czech Republic and FTVS and believed it would be a supportive environment for learning. I was looking forward to working with people from different cultures and contributing to meaningful projects while exploring how similar initiatives are run in other countries.

### **WHY INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING AT FTVS**

#### **Why did you choose to volunteer in general?**

Volunteering has always been a way for me to give back to the community, learn new skills, and meet people with similar values. I see it as an opportunity to grow both personally and professionally while contributing to something larger than myself. Through volunteering, I can support causes I care about and be part of positive social change.

#### **Why did you choose to volunteer abroad?**

I wanted to challenge myself by stepping out of my comfort zone and experiencing life in a different cultural and social context. Volunteering abroad allows for deeper intercultural understanding and provides the opportunity to develop global competencies. I was also eager to see how social and educational initiatives are organized in other countries.

#### **Why did you choose FTVS UK?**

FTVS offered a unique combination of academic excellence, an active volunteering environment, and a focus on health, sports, and education. The university's strong community spirit and ongoing projects aligned with my interests. I saw FTVS as a place where I could make a real impact while learning from experienced professionals and fellow volunteers.

### **OUTCOMES**

#### **What did you learn during your volunteering placement (500–1000 characters):**

During my time at FTVS, I learned a lot about teamwork, event planning, and intercultural communication. I developed better organizational and leadership skills while working on different activities and engaging with students and staff. I also became more adaptable and confident in new situations. The placement helped me grow both as a volunteer and as a person, teaching me how to work effectively in a multicultural environment.

#### **What did you consider to be the most successful event/activity that you have participated in?**

One of the most successful activities I was involved in was the international culture day. It brought together students and volunteers from different backgrounds to share traditions, food, music, and games. I was part of the organizing team,

and it was rewarding to see how engaged everyone was. The event created a sense of community and mutual respect. It also highlighted the diversity and inclusivity of FTVS, which made the experience even more memorable.

**What was the biggest "challenge" you managed to solve during your stay?**

One of the biggest challenges I faced was adapting to the new environment and communicating effectively in a language that was not my native one. At first, it was intimidating, especially when coordinating with different departments or presenting ideas. However, with time and support from the team, I gained more confidence. I started to find creative ways to express myself and became more proactive in taking initiative. Overcoming this helped me become more resilient and resourceful.

**FEEDBACK**

**What do you recommend/would like to say to FTVS as an institution?**

I am truly grateful to FTVS for creating such a welcoming and supportive environment for international volunteers. The institution's commitment to inclusion and cooperation made a big impact on my experience. I recommend continuing to strengthen the visibility of volunteer contributions and offering more opportunities for interaction between students and volunteers.

**What do you recommend/want to tell FTVS as a team?**

To the FTVS team—thank you for your support, patience, and encouragement throughout the project. You were always approachable and open to ideas, which made it easy to feel part of the community. I would recommend continuing this hands-on, collaborative approach—it truly empowers volunteers and motivates them to do their best.

**What do you recommend/want to say to future volunteers?**

To future volunteers: don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and try new things. Get involved, ask questions, and share your ideas—your voice matters. This experience is what you make of it, and FTVS offers a great platform for learning and growing. Enjoy every moment and take time to connect with the amazing people around you.