

My first three months at Wroclaw as a volunteer

(March-May)

Grace GOGENDEAU

MARCH

« MY FIRST STEPS, MY NEW LIFE IN WROCLAW »

Grace's adventure as a volunteer, in Wrocław, began on March 1, 2019.

My life as a volunteer :

The installation, the meeting with my roommates and especially Popi with whom I share my room, with the other volunteers, with the coordinators, my mentor . Everything went super well !

The city is just superb, very dynamic, it felt like home from the first days.

I was also able to meet my family that I hadn't seen in about 8 years.



Popi and me



Presents of my children and teachers

In my kindergarten:

My Kindergarten that is nr°104, and I work with children that they are 4-5 years old.

What I remember from this first month is my first meeting on March 12th in my kindergarten with my little "Kubusia", my two Teacher, Ivona and Honorata, and the people working in the establishment. Indeed, I was immediately very well received (singing, gifts), integrating in the programming of the days and accepted by the children and parents.

The two weeks that followed for me were more about observation and get to know better the children. I mainly did activities that fitted with their interests. For example, children often ask me for drawings to color, origami (frog, dog), crowns. Teachers that knew my artistic strengths didn't hesitate to call me as for example the art craft of a special spring crown or decorate the class for the occasion.

The only activity I organized was the flower pot decoration as a result of the "planting" lesson.



*Conclusion of this first month: despite apprehensions I quickly felt like home, with a new family.
If I have to say three words about this month it would be:*

ADVENTURE – MEETING - HAPPINESS

APRIL

« SECOND MONTH, CONFIRMATION OF MY CHOICES »

This month was special. It can be separated in three times :

➔ *1st time : arrival training in Warsaw (1.04 – 7.04. 2019)*

This week was rich in : meeting new volunteers, discovering a new city, knowledge (culture, volunteering, etc.), games. It was a very good experience, because it's the occasion to meet many volunteers of different countries in different part of Poland.



Group of Arrival Training

→ 2nd time : strike

Hardly the adventure of the EVS started, we could not go in our kindergarten because the teachers were in strike, and this lasted for 3 weeks. At the place the organization Prom organise different workshops on different topics (Mandalas ; Intercultural communications ; etc), it's a good idea for meeting other people (because we work in groups) and learn about new topics.



→ 3rd time : Go for the kindergarten

Going to the job after almost a month, it was a great pleasure, because I really attached myself to all these children. For this occasion, I cooked french food, « Rose des sables » : cornflakes and chocolate



Roses des Sables for my kids for the 1st day after the end of strike

Others :

As for the flat and our organization, we had to make things clear several times (discussion between flatmates, talk to the mentors/coordinators, etc) because we don't have the same notions concerning the cleaning for example. But it's a part of the game of the volunteering .

This month I was also in Krakow to see my Spanish roommate from Warsaw (in the arrival-training) with Popi and after celebrate the Polish Easter with my family.



*With Volunteer meet in Warsaw
(Barbara) and Popi – Krakow*



Polish Easter Eggs

Conclusion of this second month :

This month was enriching as many new meetings, confirmations of friendships, the discovery of new cities, and I realized that I love the Polish culture, that I made the right choice to stop my studies to live this experience and I even plan to stay there after.

PERSONAL ENRICHMENT – FUTURE – FRIENDSHIP

MAY

« European Month »

This month is placed under the sign of Europe.

This month of May start by a travelling to Berlin, with four other volunteers. And during this days, we meet a volunteer that we met in our arrival-training.

I have never been in this city before, and the geographic place of Wroclaw is very good for travelling. I have already planned my next trip, to Sweden in June.



This month continued with my participation (with other volunteers) in the European's Day on 26 May, where Prom had a stand to present the EVS. It was very interesting to be able to present, to exchange about our volunteering but also our countries with young and old people.

And at the end of this month I also made a presentation of France to my class and another class, with a bonus tasting of French pancakes « Crêpes », which we didn't have to wait long time to taste them !!



This month was also Mother's Day, so I organized two activities :

- French poem (with a Polish translation) with a decorative frame*
- A hanging paper flower*

I did also another activity for the agility of cutting, coloring the duck



Conclusion of this third month :

This month was very nice because I had many opportunities to know Europe, other organisations, know the traditional polish mother's day, and the best day of this month was when I presented my country, because children were very enthusiastic.

EUROPE- PRESENTATION- CONVERSATION

Conclusion of the first three months :

For me, these different months were on top !

Knowing Polish culture before coming also allowed me to adopt very quickly to different Polish lifestyles.

I was very well welcomed by the organization as soon as I arrived in Wrocław. It is also present all times when I need it. My mentor, is very friendly, every time I spend very good time when we meet and like the organization. They are never far when I have a problem.

As for my integration into the volunteers, it went very well. Before coming, I was apprehensive about my integration with my English level, but everyone was patient, which allowed me to quickly find my place. The old volunteers are also a good support because they have allowed a good integration in the city, between us, but also for the Kindergarten (know how it works, how it works for them, etc.)

As for my flat and my roommates, everything is perfect, we get along well and we help each other. Despite difficulties at the beginning, that was normal, we had very quickly adapted to each other. And I am lucky to have Popi, because it's a very good girl, and we have a very good connection.

For my Kindergarten, the first month was my adaptation time, as my two teachers and children made me feel better, and now I'm perfectly comfortable. The language barrier is insignificant for me because I try to progress in Polish and the children try to talk to me in English or body language. That the language barrier is nothing and when you want to communicate, you can.

I continue to be very motivated, with the smile on my face, for the next 9 months, that I hope will go as well as this beginning of this beautiful adventure !!!