

Hi, my name is Meggy and I'm from France !

My ESC was my first long-term experience abroad.

After a 24 hours bus ride, I finally arrived in Vienna where I met my new roommates and we went to walk around the city. One of the local theater was having a show outside, and the first song we heard was *Willkommen* from the musical *Cabaret*. A very fitting song indeed!

Vienna is such a beautiful city with so many things to do, especially culture wise! It is a big city but also has a very chill vibe, which is a great combination in my opinion. And being in a big city also means more European volunteers to hang out with! I'm really happy how quickly we bonded together, and it's awesome to meet people from so many different countries. You get to grow and be independent but also have a safety net and a big group of new friends at the same time!

During my year in Austria, I was volunteering in a Mädchenzentrum called *peppa (youth center), working with teenage girls from 10 to 20 years old.

My tasks there were to cook snacks for the teens, to play board games with them (I can now play UNO in pretty good German!), talk with them, make art and crafts, help a bit with English homework if they asked, and tidy the place a bit every evening. We also did quite a few excursions! We went to workshops about women's empowerment, crafts workshops, ice skating, swimming, to a petting zoo, to a restaurant, etc.! My work was never boring, and both my colleagues and the teenage girls were so nice and so welcoming. I'm so happy that's where I got to do my ESC.

I only spoke a few words of German before coming to Vienna. Even if my German level is still low, I got to get much more familiar with the language! Hearing a language around you almost 24/7 really helps! (80s German pop music, like Nena, is also a great vocabulary teacher.)

Across the year I got to do a lot of very different things. Big things like visiting all the museums at Museumsquartier, going to a fancy Viennese ball, going to Comic Con, and to a big film festival. And smaller things that make the going abroad experience so special like going karaoke with my new international friends, partying on a roof, the on-arrival training, going to free dance classes, swimming in the Danube and eating quite a lot of vegan ice cream. And because Vienna is so close to the border, it was also really easy to travel to the neighbor countries like Czech Republic, Slovakia, or Hungary!

The places and events in Vienna I recommend to new volunteers:

Museumsquartier, Prater, Burg Kino, Haydn Kino, the Viennale Film Festival, Vienna Comic Con, picnics near the Danube, and Veganista for great vegan ice cream.

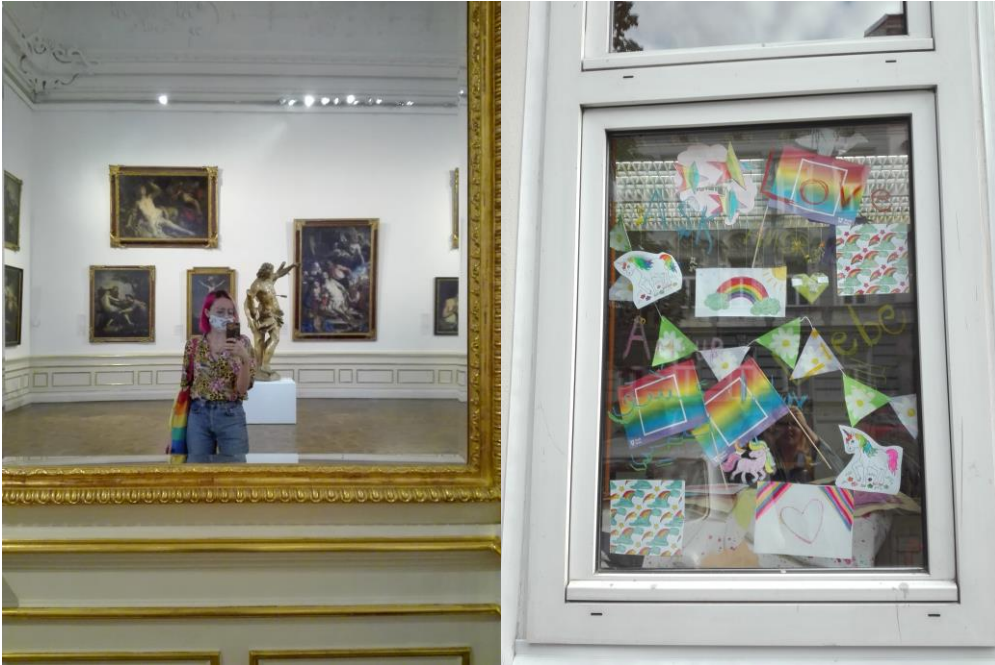


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1. At the Belvedere Museum
2. The window at *peppa
3. The BOKU Ball
4. Trip to Hallstatt with volunteers friends (here with another ESC volunteer Isabel!)



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