

**Report by Claudia Rubio Gonzalez
Volunteer at Kindergruppe Butterbrot**

I arrived in Vienna speaking only Spanish. Today, I'm quite fluent in English and can hold basic conversations in German.



I had never lived alone before, so this experience made me grow up — learning to go to the doctor, to talk about my problems... in short, gaining independence on many levels.

It also introduced me to the world of work — its pros and cons — and helped me clarify what I want to study next year.

But volunteering doesn't only give you work-related things. It also gives you incredible people to share the experience with. This year has been good in terms of the volunteering itself, but even better thanks to the people I've met.

I'm leaving with friends that I know are for life, and with the happiness that comes from working with such wonderful children, who always gave me a smile, a hug, or a drawing — things that mean a lot to them, and to me too.

I'm taking with me Samira (ESC Hosting coordinator from Grenzenlos), who never refused to help me — and this year I've had quite a few problems, both medical and with my first project. I'm very grateful to her.

Also to my coworkers, who supported me a lot and gave me smiles every day at work. To my mentor, who never judged me even though I can be a bit messy, haha. And of course, the support from the parents at the Kindergruppe.

Without all these people, my experience wouldn't have been the same. They helped me move forward. And even though the end of some projects brought sadness, being surrounded by such good company has always been the best part.



Claudia Rubio González.